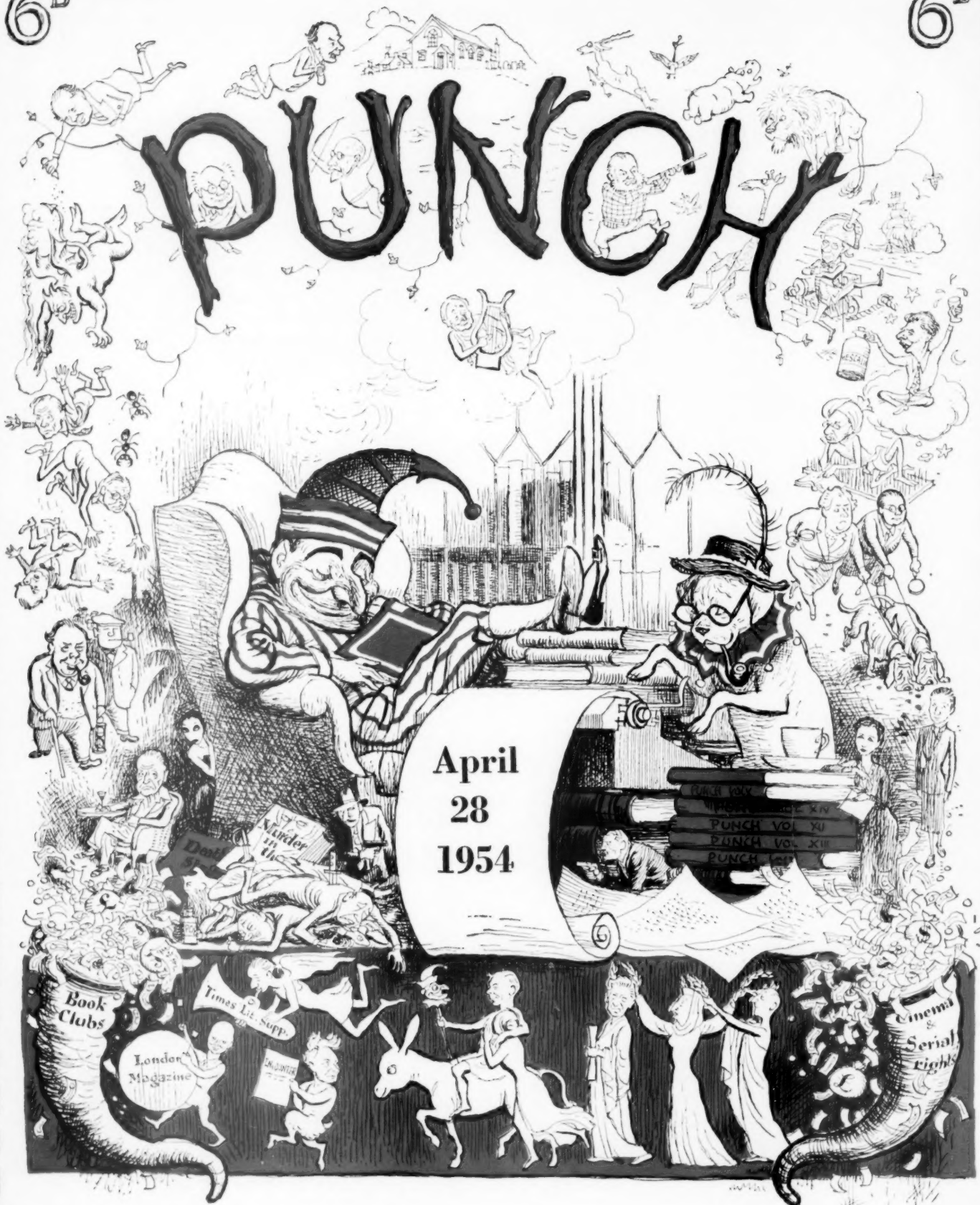


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LATE IN THE 90's this double-decker steam omnibus served the public up and down the Thames Valley.

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Directors and senior executives, unlike those they employ, are often left to provide for the evening of their much-taxed days as best they can out of savings. The London Omnibus carries a 'Top Hat' scheme; which fits almost anyone who wants a 'Top Hat'.

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ONE of the rigorous tests passed with honours by the Tudor Oyster Prince was conducted in mine-workings 1,000 feet below the ground. This new self-winding wrist-watch, sponsored by Rolex of Geneva, was worn continuously by a miner, through no less than 252 hours of drilling and hewing at the coal-face.

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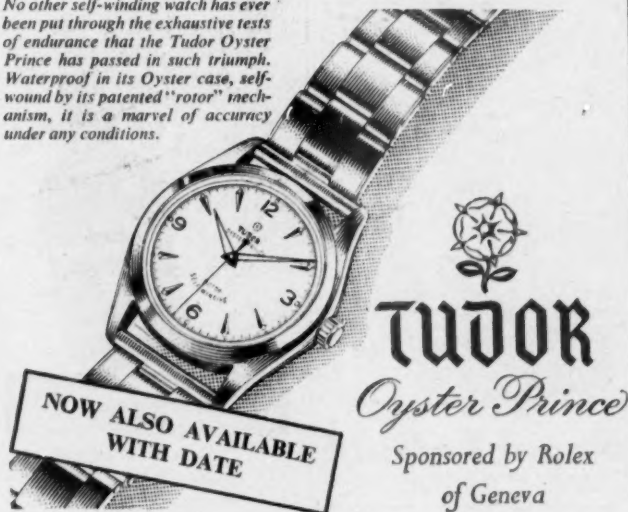
How did the watch react? Hard though it is to believe, at the end

of the six-week period, during which the watch was never once removed from the miner's wrist and its hands were never once reset, the Tudor Oyster Prince did not have to be corrected by more than a few seconds.

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The Englishman's^{*} Guide to Smirnoff Vodka



The Island Race are among the world's most discerning drinkers. They are, however, notably conservative in their tastes, preferring to stick to what they know than experiment with alien beverages of doubtful potency.

Believing, however, that Englishmen^{*} should share in the pleasures of cocktail imbibers in other lands, we gladly provide a few facts about the world-famous Smirnoff Vodka.

1. Smirnoff Vodka is a smooth palatable drink, no stronger than your Gin, Whisky or Rum.

3. Smirnoff Vodka makes a most attractive drink taken straight "à la Russe", especially when accompanied by savouries.

2. Smirnoff Vodka is today one of America's most popular drinks, where it is used as the blending spirit for new and established cocktails as well as for long drinks.

4. Smirnoff Vodka is made in this country according to the traditional recipe used by Pierre Smirnoff, purveyor of Vodka to the Imperial Court of Russia.

Try Smirnoff instead of Gin in your favourite cocktail. Try a VODKATINI (Smirnoff Vodka and Vermouth mixed in your favourite proportions) and a SCREWDRIVER (Smirnoff Vodka and Orange Juice).

^{*} To say nothing of the Scots, the Welsh and those of the Irish whose pleasures know no frontier.



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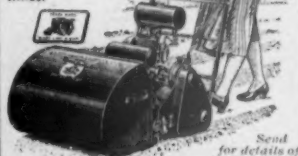
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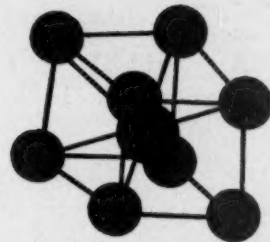
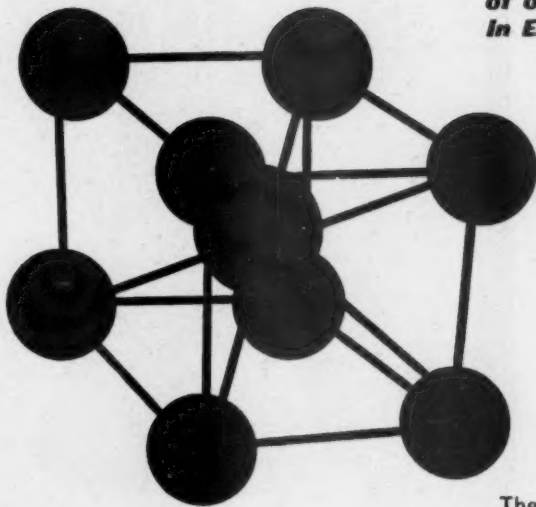


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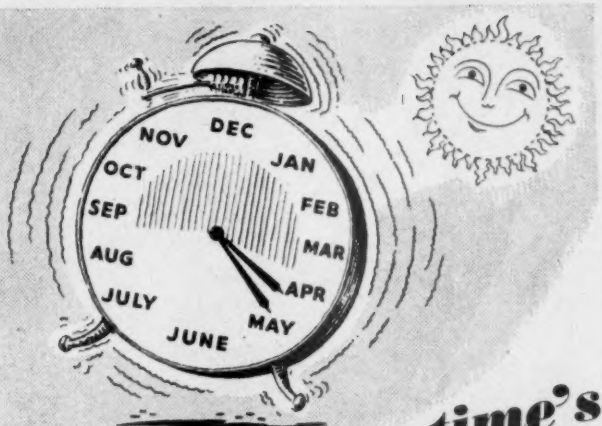
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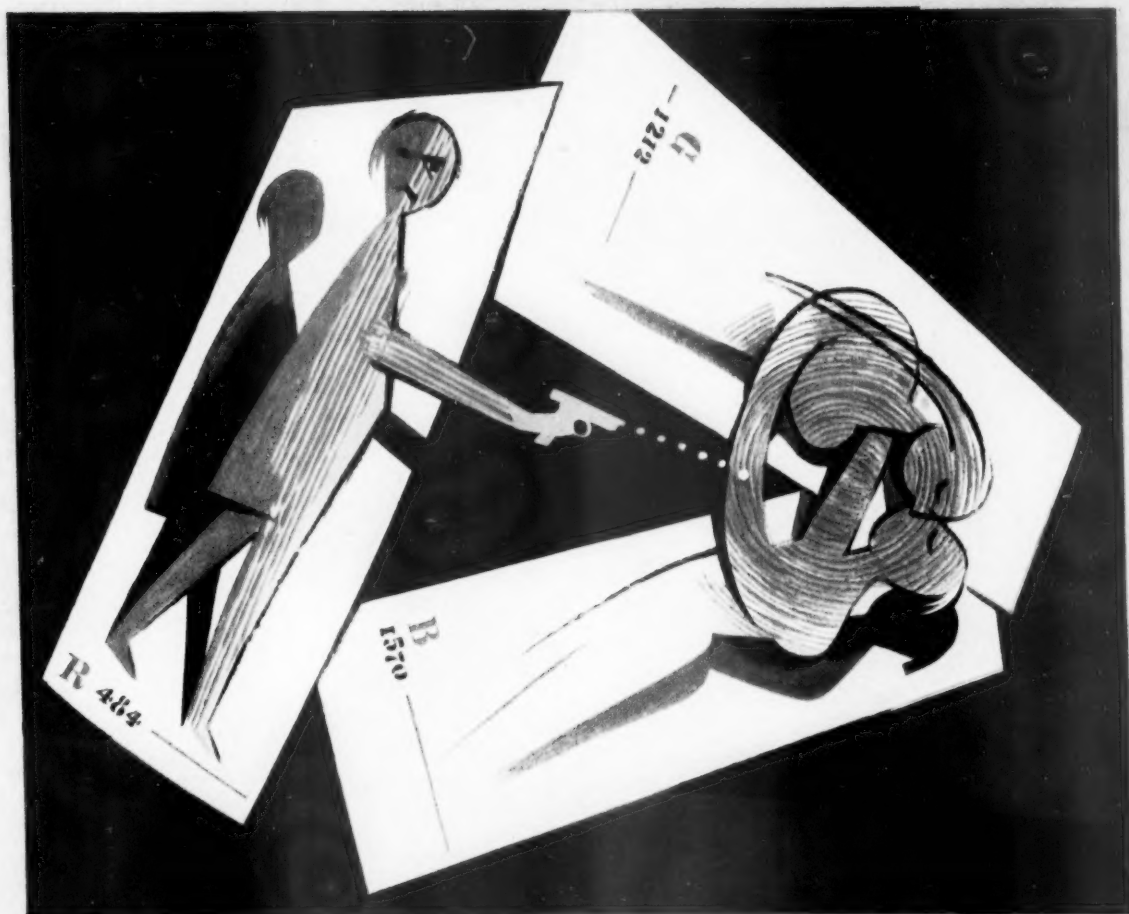
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Written by Stephen Potter, designed by Lewitt-Him.

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Punch, April 28 1954

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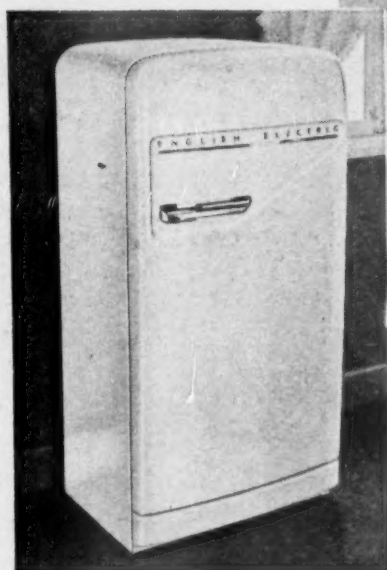
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Lavender which satisfies
the smart woman. It is a charming
economy because it lasts longer



and she loves its supreme
freshness and fragrance

From six shillings to thirtyseven and fourpence



CHARIVARIA

EARLY among the new season's items of cricket gossip comes the news that lumberjackets, check shirts, fancy waistcoats and coloured trousers have been banned for match play by the Hereford Evening Cricket League. At Lord's, too, the traditional white ensemble will be adhered to, varied only slightly according to the detergent used.

Mud in Their Eye

VISITING experts from Whitehall have become an established feature of the British agricultural scene, and are usually to be found conveniently



at hand to advise on cowshed drainage, clean female pig prices or the relative advantages of arsenic and benzene hexachloride for exterminating apple sawfly without endangering the life of bees. The recent formation of a *Daily Express* Farmers' Guidance Bureau, offering personal visits to farmers so that the "fullest possible guidance" can be given, seems in the circumstances as superfluous as it is well-intentioned—unless the experts from Fleet Street can advise the British farmer how to cut down the amount of free advice to the acre.

Nation of Shopkeepers

THE British Industries Fair is poised for the spring, and the world's shoppers are already beginning to converge upon Earl's Court. Among unusual and interesting items promised for display by the Board of Trade's publicity section are:

A prefabricated, demountable, fully tropicalized dwelling-house,
Nuns' guimps,
Fireproofed artificial flowers,
All-metal powder bowls with musical movements,
Surgeons' bags in termite-proof plastic,

Radioactive isotope handling tongs,
Sprays for glazing meat pies,
Artificial human eyes in a range of colours and sizes, 18 rights and 18 lefts, in velvet-lined leather case, and
Cravats for postillions.

Beat that, Japan!

With the Gloves On

SENATOR McCARTHY, in his new capacity as Senate sub-committee investigator under investigation by a Senate sub-committee, has agreed at a preliminary meeting that he will neither take part in the deliberations or votes of the committee nor "help to write its report." His supporters will no doubt instance this as an example of his fairmindedness, but many of his opponents will be disappointed to find



that the report, when it appears, lacks the hard-hitting quality which they had hoped for.

Naiads

BRIGHTON bathers will be supervised this summer by a team of six Life Girls, announces the Corporation's publicity director, and invites Press photographers to call at the resort next Sunday to record their impressions. The girls will patrol the beaches in "swimsuits of a type similar to those

worn by the British Olympic swimmers," and will also be equipped with "special off-duty swimsuits." The cameramen of certain papers, it is thought, may insist on their readers' right to know just how quickly, and with what disregard for beach etiquette, an urgent change can be made from one costume into another.

On the Slate

SIR WILL LAWTHORP and the N.U.M. had to exercise great diplomacy at Blyth, Northumberland, when four thousand miners threatened to strike because their free coal would



not burn. Obviously any insistence on the production of combustible coal would have touched the men on yet another tender spot and brought about a strike anyway. It is thought that union officials saved the day by explaining that the miners were at least better off than the general public, whose coal not only won't burn but costs seven pounds a ton.

Raw Material Only, Please

THE Khokhlov-Okolovich affair has earned sympathy for the professional thriller-writer on the ground that truth is beating him at his own game. But it is really the newspaper journalist who should be pitied. Cigarette cases that shoot bullets, and assassins turned from their purpose by the love of a good woman, are corny old ingredients in fiction; it is for the newspaper man that they continue to exemplify the romance

which he has always striven to impose on real life, and his feelings at present may be compared to those of a conscientious cabinet-maker walking in the woods who comes suddenly upon a tree blossoming with fine furniture.

Speed-Up

NEWs of the abandonment of road safety weeks by the Ministry of Transport has caused some concern. Any suspicion that the decision is one of despair, comparable with that lately taken in Coventry on another matter, should however be dispelled by the energetic action by the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents, which has just announced the prize-winners in its National Road Safety Play Competition, and by the Ministry itself in announcing that the reorganization of rear-lamp rules will be completed by October 1, 1956.

Assignment

FAILURE to find a customer for the *Evening Standard* helicopter has resulted in its recommissioning for work with the paper. Its main task will be to gather exclusive news stories exposing the harshness of official regulations hampering it in its task of gathering exclusive news stories.

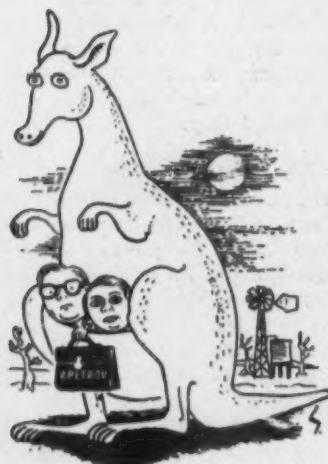
Reshuffle

MESSRS. Petrov and Gouzenko, it is rumoured,

At a Foreign Office desk are soon to train,

While the Embassy appointments that they bloomed

Will be filled by Messrs. Burgess and Maclean.



THE RETURN OF ASHENDEN

It faintly amused Ashenden to be back in Geneva. The place seemed much the same. The lake was still blue, the Mont Blanc peaks still snow-clad, the air along the Quai Woodrow Wilson still sharp to the lungs. Even the Café Bavaria was little changed, but the French accents, temporarily refined by the diplomatic influx from the west, were less excruciating than Ashenden remembered them, and the cartoons of Stresemann, Litvinov, Briand, Ramsay MacDonald, though already faded, were new since Ashenden's day.

Ashenden ordered another beer, and glanced at the brunette intimately sharing a table near the bar with a blond man who, Ashenden happened to know, was a junior Conference Office official with a wife and three children in Berkshire. The waiter was brusque. The café was filled with cosmopolitan attachés, eating with steady enjoyment at their Treasuries' expense; an unattached Englishman making five Swiss francs last the whole evening was no great catch.

"And what brings Mr. Ashenden back to Geneva?"

Ashenden turned. It was an English voice, its vowels imperfectly cultivated. Ashenden saw an old man, sallow and stooping, with a decayed military air; better shaved, he might well have passed without comment in one of the bleaker corners of the United Service Club.

"Good God," said Ashenden. "It's R."

"An unexpected pleasure."

He looked as unsavoury as ever. Age had merely etched his shiftiness in deeper lines. The hand which Ashenden briefly took was unmanicured, and the close-set eyes had their old, hard gleam.

"And what," asked Ashenden, "brings Mr. —?" He broke off. "I never knew your name."

R. evaded both the explicit and the implicit question. "Still gathering material?" he said.

"In a way."

It was getting dusk but the café lights were not yet lit. Ashenden saw that the couple near the bar were now embracing. He drew in his breath sharply.

"You can't still be with Intelligence," said R.

"And why not?"

R. laughed unpleasantly, and Ashenden was angry for having allowed himself to be stung. He turned his back and gazed out over the lake. A small steamer ploughed sullenly by close to the shore. In the clear air the sound of Slav voices came harshly over the water. Ashenden fancied he caught the words "Chou En-lai" and "Anthony Eden," followed by some ribald reference, in interpreter's accents, to the Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission. Chattering broke out in the café from a party of Korean stenographers.

Ashenden said over his shoulder: "I suppose you are working for the Russians." It was cheap, but then R. had always had a degrading effect. Besides, a genuine curiosity had seized him.

"For the whole world. And you?"

Ashenden felt suddenly cold. Surely even Whitehall would not make the blunder of letting R. meddle in atomic security? Then he made up his mind. R.'s opinion of him was not a thing he especially valued. He drew from his note-case a small pasteboard rectangle, but held it in his hand well out of the other's reach.

"Let us put our cards on the table."

"By all means."

The exchange was made in silence. R.'s card, Ashenden noted without surprise, was a soiled envelope fished out of an inside pocket. He took Ashenden's in his wrinkled fingers, holding it by one corner with bizarre delicacy. He read it aloud.

"Ashenden's Confidential Investigations. Divorce. Shadowing." He coughed facetiously. "Well, well," he said.

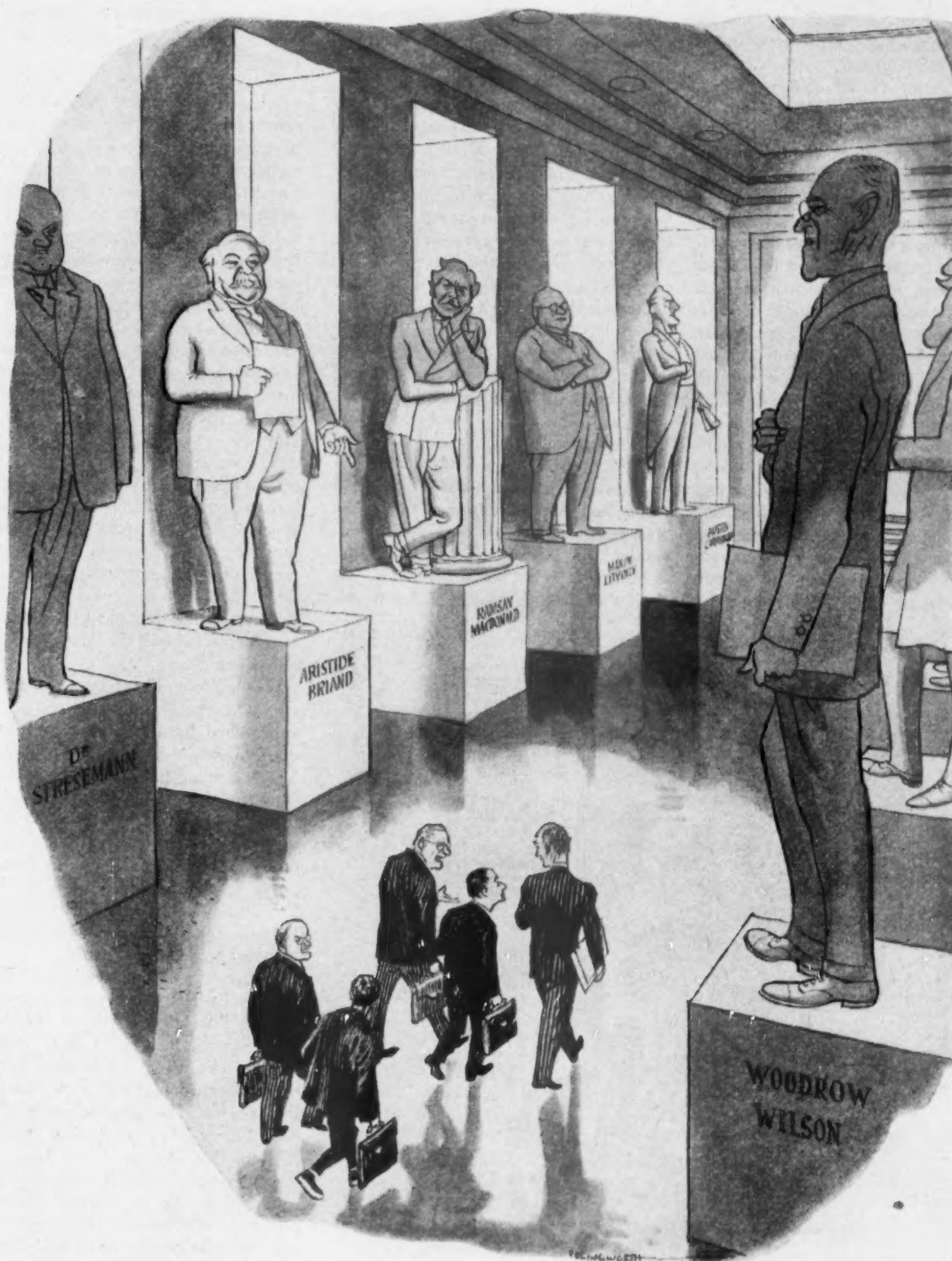
R.'s envelope was postmarked London and addressed in black type-script of pretentious size to "Roland Rabbitt, Esq., O.B.E., Poste Restante, Geneva." Ashenden turned it over. The flap was embossed "British Council."

"My assignment," explained R., "is to try to interest the Viet Nam observers in Kipling."

Ashenden said nothing. He felt a certain relief. But it had shocked him to realize that during his past association with R. he had in effect been addressing him by his Christian name.

J. B. BOOTHROYD

PALAIS DES FANTÔMES



Geneva, April 26, 1954

Any Number Can Play

By B. A. YOUNG

AT school I used to despise "atinks" and kept firmly in the classic groove, although my friend Charley Popoff told me I was wasting my time. "What foreign power's going to employ you to find out the gender of *pelagus* and *virus*?" he used to say in that scornful voice of his from which he was never able entirely to eradicate the lack of a Russian accent.

Popoff was a very ambitious boy. He was a party member before he left his kindergarten, and had been in the pay of the Soviet Union a couple of years before he put on his first long trousers. He undertook to steal a piece of uranium from the stinks lab once for Stalin's birthday, but he was never able to lay hands on any. The lab boy, he said, was a crypto-Fascist, and kept all the radioactive isotopes locked away somewhere. When the great day arrived and he had still not succeeded in getting any uranium, he took a lump of potassium instead, as a kind of token payment. Wishing to conceal it somewhere safe when he went to bed that night, he

slipped it in his wash-jug. Unfortunately the jug contained water, and the potassium went

$2K + 2H_2O \rightarrow 2KOH + H_2$
or words to that effect, and filled his cubicle with burning hydrogen.

By the time I left school I was myself a party member of some standing, and mad keen to sell something important to a foreign government. One evening I had a press ticket for a revue at the Unity Theatre. During the interval I was approached by a man wearing dark glasses and carrying a bomb. "I come from Joe," he said. "Keep in touch with us." From his pocket he took a pack of cards and invited me to choose one. I took the six of diamonds. "Don't tell me what it is," said this man. "You will be contacted later."

During the war, confidential information was easier to come by, and as soon as I could I arranged to see my friend again. We fixed a rendezvous under the clock at Victoria Station. "Your card is the six of diamonds," he said when we met. I agreed that it was.

"That's ten roubles you owe me," he said. "Shall I take it out of our next payment to you?"

We went to a shady little hotel in the neighbourhood, where he had booked rooms for us under the assumed names of Burke and Hare. "Now," he said, "what is it you have to offer us?" I could tell him, I said, the sequence of stripping a Bren gun, the name of the C.I.G.S., and the procedure for establishing communication with an unknown station on the wireless. It seemed, however, that his government was not interested in any of these. They were interested chiefly at that time in radar, jet-propulsion and plutonium, but I never learned anything about these matters, and in the end I went underground.

The war took me out of England, and for a while I lost touch with the organization. They felt no doubt that the appearance of an agent in out-of-the-way stations like Dunoon and Prestatyn might provoke comment; and by the time the war was over I decided reluctantly that they must have decided to drop me. I quit the Army and went into Fleet Street.

One evening I was leaving El Vino after an editorial conference when I was approached by a tall, swarthy man of unmistakably Oriental appearance. "بلك متجد جين" he said, speaking from right to left. I had picked up enough Persian in the Army to know what he wanted, and, hailing a taxi, I drove with him to an hotel in Bloomsbury. In the third-floor room to which I was conducted I found Charley Popoff. He took a pack of cards from his pocket. "Choose one," he invited me.

I selected a card at random. "What is your card?" Charley asked, swiftly looking through the rest of the pack. "The nine of hearts," I said. "Quite correct," he said. "You must excuse these precautions, but it is essential that we should be absolutely sure of the *bona fides* of everyone we deal with."

From that time on I was kept continuously busy on small assignments. I would find out in advance the explanations of illustrated jokes; I handed over the solutions to next week's crossword puzzles; I ascertained the names of the authors of *The Times's* turnover



articles. In exchange, I was handed from time to time a sealed envelope containing a hundred pounds in forged notes.

This routine lasted several months. At the end of this time Charley sent for me. "As you may have guessed," he said, "we have been putting you through a test period. Now I have a surprise for you. How would you like a trip to Rome?"

A trip to Rome! It could mean only one thing: I was wanted in Moscow. "When do I start?" I asked, my heart thumping. "Is your briefcase packed?" he said. I flipped it open and showed him the pyjamas and bedroom-slippers in the secret compartment. "There is an aeroplane leaving London Airport at nine to-morrow morning," he told me. "Good luck."

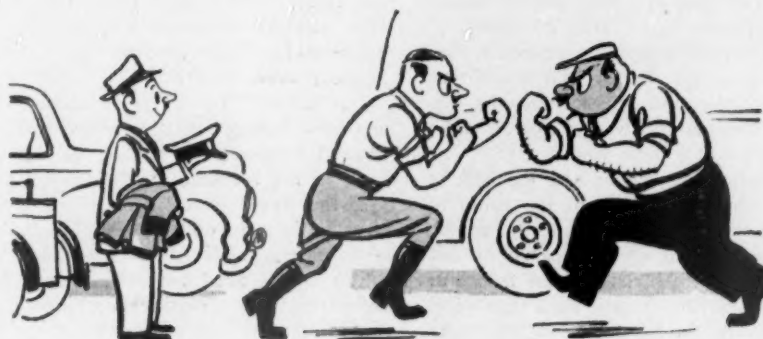
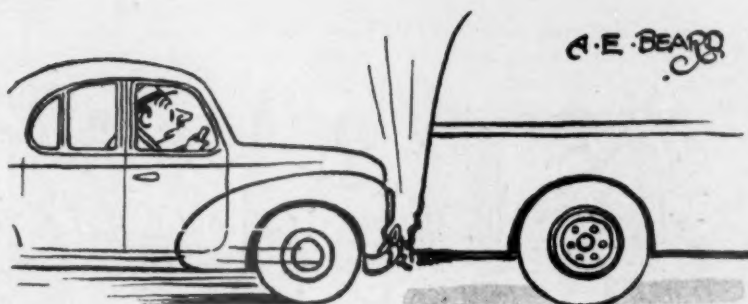
In Moscow I was met at the airfield by a uniformed official who was introduced to me as the Commissar for Workers' Entertainment. "We've heard much about you," she greeted me to my surprise. "We shall expect a lot."

After a long interview in which I was closely interrogated as to the nature of my work in Fleet Street I was set to work in the editorial offices of *Krokodil*. My mission was to make the jokes more difficult to understand. Although I enjoyed my work there on the whole, I found it hard to get used to the lack of freedom, and to the fact that I was always followed about by two or three "watchdogs." One of these, I discovered, was Miss Rebecca West, who was writing a study of me for the *Evening Standard*; another was an official of the M.V.D.; but the third was an enigma. He kept always at a respectful distance, never seeming to wish to approach me, but at the same time never letting me out of his sight.

One evening I had been given a pass to the Bolshoi Theatre to see the ballet. My M.V.D. custodian left me for a moment, and I suddenly became aware that this mystery-man was standing beside me. From the pocket of his fur-lined dinner-jacket he drew a pack of cards and invited me to choose one. "Give me the ace of clubs," I said.

He took from the pack the card I had requested and slipped the rest of them back into his pocket. "I come from Winston," he murmured. "Keep in touch with us."

That is how I came to be on the Woomera rocket-range that fatal day.





"She wins it every year . . . !"

Shaw's Corner—Any Offers?

By G. W. STONIER

"TO Let" notices had brought us out on this rather chill afternoon, chasing and chased along A600. Past Hatfield we sliced; we shaved Welwyn. Getting warmer! (But it didn't feel so.) There through the trees was the Garden City, old as Garden Cities go, where Shaw lodged before settling at Ayot St. Lawrence.

The signpost pointed left into country neither hilly nor flat, open nor wooded. We had the lanes to ourselves. Was it here pilgrims had flocked—walked, biked—to catch a glimpse of the old Knickerbocker Glory? Not a ting, not a tyre-mark? After all that brag and gab—nothing? Hedges and trees seemed to have returned to themselves.

Then a couple of fields off rose a Greek temple, some landlord's whim—admired by a few—to oust the existing church, which abides decently in ruins; and we came to a bend and the second and greater folly: Shaw's Corner.

The proprietary gate, lettered in iron, barred a New Rectory, far newer than the temple, and ugly and assertive into the bargain. Shaw paid £6,000 for it. You might wonder why.

You might wonder why the bulk of his fortune was left to the cause of phonetic spelling, a little to the drama, nothing at all to the upkeep of this mansion for which, after the failure of an appeal fund to raise more than a few hundreds, the National Trust now seeks

a tenant. Only £170 per annum is asked, and the lessee—should such eventuate—will find himself with a roomy house, an acre of ground, his own power plant and car park, and the obligation at week-ends to fling open to the trail of feet and eyes Shaw's study.

We stood in the hall. The just-as-it-was look halted us (my wife remarking "What a cold house"), drew the eye to a piano with the lid raised and Schubert's songs. Here, when Mrs. Shaw was ill upstairs, he would sit playing and singing opera (early Italian, not Wagner) and air-raids—not very frequent, one imagines—provided the background for Mozart. Tableau. Mrs. Pat Campbell turns up with the caption when in one of her letters she begs him not to send photographs, which will only be given away, though she has rather fancied "the one of you as Jesus Christ playing the piano." Mrs. Pat! Ellen Terry! How wickedly warm they are, and how much in love with love he, like any Elizabethan sonneteer!

But further? Having been dazzled, and never having been able to find real Shaw, I suppose I was looking for him here, in the beautiful Chinese pigeon over the closed stove, more prints of birds up the stairs wall. A fowl himself, of the capering sort? Ah, the hat-stand! But a big colonial hat told nothing except that he liked playing the stranger. Sticks and canes—a confusion—

The caretaker's wife, quietly appearing, handed us a very thin polished cane in the head of which was a tiny flash-bulb. He liked toys, and hated twilight.

We were led to the study. This, then, was to be the museum piece. But when had it not looked famous? Shelved on two sides with reference books, histories, editions of Shaw; window desk and typewriter, shrouded; caricatures crowding the fire nook; filing cabinets.

"Thirty-six of 'em," said the caretaker who had joined us, "empty now."

So we stared at the cabinets and at drawers of envelopes in which once had been snapshots. Gene Tunney's name came up; a most orderly tool-box was exhibited, a package addressed only with a sketch of Shaw and the words "wherever he may be." But that was the whole point: Where, ever, *was* he? Not in this den, with its Shaw trophies everywhere, as photographic as the Sherlock Holmes room seen a few years ago.

More Shaws in the drawing-room, including Rodin's, and for the first time, crowning the mantelpiece, Charlotte Shaw. That marriage of the Shavian Phoenix and Turtle—"for the sake of my life's happiness," he has told us, "I dared not make love to my wife"—produced only exasperation. She travelled, acquired a Platonic lover or son in the other Shaw (T. E. Lawrence),

hated this house. And there at the other end of the mantelpiece, nine inches high, was Shakespeare himself, too pretty for mocking. I couldn't help picking him up, wondering as I did so whether in four hundred years' time another would be doing the same with a Shaw statuette. Over a chair back, as if just put off, lay a Chinese gown and cap.

Used he to wear it? we inquired.

Oh yes, a gift from the author of *Lady Precious Stream*: their photographs were in the scrap-book. Would we step this way to see the scrap-book?

Another cool, light, angular room looking on the garden—the dining-room—with a mantelpiece of deities, Gandhi, Trotsky, Lenin, Stalin, Ibsen, William Morris—and who's this clean-shaven?—Granville Barker. "You look at the scrap-book," I whispered to my wife, "I'll take a walk round the garden." At the moment there was a sharp hail shower, but it passed and the caretaker and I set off along curved paths.

We came to trees, steps where the ground fell away. "St. Joan," said my guide, turning. None other, gaunt in bronze, one hand clenched and the other shading her eyes as she scanned horizons. I had never much taken to her on the stage. At her feet was buried a household cat. Why wouldn't I, couldn't I, sympathize?

Our path led winding through the trees and the long grass to a small cabin, out of sight of the house. Here, and not in posterity's den, he had written the later plays (including *St. Joan*?) and many of those letters to Mrs. Pat—strange, ebullient, cavaliering letters—which Charlotte might always read before posted. I stared at the small table and chair, the bunk, the electric fire, and—no trophies, no effigy of Shaw. As an old man, with the snow round, he would pull the blanket over his head and write . . . For the first time I was stirred.

Back in the dining-room Stalin, Gandhi and Lenin kept a committee eye on visitors, and my wife pointed to Charlie Chaplin in the scrap-book, uneasily smiling with the message "To the greatest man in the world, what can one say except 'Hello'?" Oh lord. And we're all so sick of Shaw; we can't, for the moment anyway, either like, or enjoy disliking, him enough.

The caretaker and his wife were bearing down on us again.

What prospective tenants? I asked.

Oh several—one gentleman that very morning asking to be shown round.

But wouldn't it be horribly expensive to run?

Not with a quiet decent couple to look after things.

Fires, though—added my wife—would cost a small fortune.

Well, we hoped they would find their tenant, the last whole-hearted Shavian, who would shoulder uncomplacabilities and bestow reverence and love where there had been none.

Visit completed, and thanks paid, we chatted more easily in the kitchen. The big range warmed, a clock ticked, there were tea-cups and, high up on the clothes-rack, a robin singing; all day, we were told, he sang, and at dusk would ask to be let out. Almost that now.

We saw him again, as we passed the drawing-room bow, fluttering, and hopping on Shaw's head, waiting for the casement to open. Blithe bird!—Poor, brilliant Shaw, *rara avis*!

The Merry Marxists



"It is high time we stopped creating the impression that . . . we are some kind of human beings that never eat, sleep, play, dream or make love."—Mr. Harry Pollitt at the British Communist Party National Congress

[To be sung to the tune of "The Red Flag"]

WE 'LL hold our sides, laugh fit to bust,

For Comrade Pollitt says we must.

In fact we'll laugh until we cry,

Yet raise the scarlet banner high.

And hard though it may be, somehow,

While we discharge our sacred vow

To keep the Red Flag flying still,

We WILL be gay, we will, we will!

Though faithful to the People's Flag

We still enjoy a homely gag.

To demonstrate our sense of fun

We'll swoop a pun with anyone.

Let cowards flinch and traitors sneer!

Ideological good cheer

Dispense, and curse with clenched fists

The dirty deviationists.

With heads uncovered swear we all

To answer King Street's playful

call—

Evoke the German's glad "Tee-hee!"

The Russian's visibility.

Chicago swells the mirthful throng—

For once Chicago can't be wrong!

Come gallows grim or dungeon dark,

We dearly love a jolly lark.

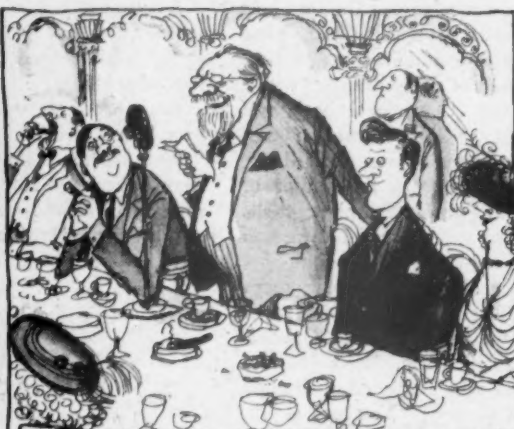
PERCY CUDLIPP

The Rake's Progress : The Novelist

By RONALD SEARLE



1. ADVENT Son of a North Country tailor. Writes authentic novel in dialect on the backs of old envelopes between teabreaks. Sacked.



2. TRIUMPH Book published. Immediate Success. Acclaimed Foyles Literary Luncheon. Mobb'd in W.H. Smith's, Clapham



3. GLORY Second novel chosen as Book at Bedtime. Bats for Authors at National Book League Cricket match. Stage rights of 1st book bought for Wilfrid Pickles



4. TEMPTATION Name unfamiliar to John Lehmann at PEN Club party. Thenceforth tormented by desire to get into New Writing. Moves to Paris



5. DOWNFALL Critical analysis of J.P. Sartre rejected by London Magazine and Encounter. Sales of third novel sink to 750 copies *



6. RUIN Psychopathic treatment for schizophrenia. Emigrates to Australia. Reversed

* Including British Commonwealth



Is it Happy? A Modern Novel

IS it happy for me, is it happy
That my father, Lord Beale, was so famous
And I am a ne'er-do-weel, is it happy?

And what of my mother, "the lady,"
As we called her because she was so strong minded, born
Plaidy,
Was it happy for her
That father was never there?
Was it happy?

And Rory, Rory my brother,
Who knew neither father nor mother,
Being adopted in infancy by Uncle Pym,
Whose name he took, was it happy for him?

Thorwald our spaniel, gun-trained,
Died of a fatty heart.
Well, father was never at home
And I didn't shoot.
Was it happy for Thorwald?

And the money paid out for a worthless scrip
That might have been mine to-day
If he'd stuck to Gilt Edged or Blue Chip,
Is that happy?

My father died in his fame
Saving his country and me
From the people over the sea.
How does it feel being Beale,
Lord Beale, and a ne'er-do-weel?

I have brought mother home to the little house
Having let the grand one for a Commando Course
(Telling them to look out for the pictures of course).

All my life I have tried not to be envious
Of father, or take it out by being nefarious.
Truly I loved him, revere
The memory of this great soldier.
Field Marshal Lord B. he was when he died,
Is it happy for me?

Mother says I should bring home a bride,
Greatness skips a generation, she says, and he,
My son, will not be a nonentity.

I'll do it, why not?
Play the part out,
Find a sort of happiness in it too, I dare say, slyly
Being as it were all this quite so entirely,
Blithely calling the saviour of my country Father,
Happy for me!
Blithely begetting sons to carry it farther,
Will that be?

I'll ask Cynthia to-night, she'll say yes,
When we've got the Commandos out she'll love the place.

It's occurred to me also once or twice of late
To join the True Church, something father would hate,
Not the Anglicans, of course—they're too humdrum.
It would have to be the Roman Communion.
Well, I've read Father Gerard and about the recusants quite a lot
And can prove, because they suffered, there was no Catholic Plot.

Is it happy for me driving mother mad?
Does she wish I was bad—
Think Rory might have been better than me?
Well, if she does she don't let me see.

Happy, is it happy?

STEVIE SMITH

How to be a Literary Critic

By GEORGETTE HEYER



THE first step towards this goal is to write a book, or even, if you are very industrious, two or three books, and to get these published. Failing a book, a few articles will do.

They need not be profound, or beautifully written, and the book need not be successful, the whole point of this admittedly laborious start to your chosen profession being that by getting into print you will subsequently be able to appear as a critic in the guise of a Well-known Author. The publication of an article will turn you into an author; and editorial or B.B.C. propaganda will very soon make you well known.

The next step is to rid yourself of diffidence. If, when you are first handed the latest work of one whom you suspect to be your literary superior, you feel that it would be effrontery for you to criticize it, do not decline to do so.

Remember that no qualifications are necessary for a Literary Critic, and that this is the Day of the Little Man, when the more insignificant you are, and the more valueless your opinions, the greater will be your chance of obtaining a hearing. Moreover, if you stick to the job you will soon cease to feel such qualms. There is nothing like sitting in judgment on other people's work for increasing your self-esteem.

There are four kinds of Literary Criticism, but it will only be necessary to discuss three of these, since the first kind is a fast-vanishing one, and is in the hands of a few survivors from the Bad Old Days. These persons hold obstinately to the belief that a Literary Critic should not only be himself a distinguished man of letters but should also be (if not an expert on the subject of the book he is to review) at least a man of wide culture and critical ability. This belief is obviously too out-

worn to be worthy of consideration, so we will pass on to the three more important kinds of Literary Criticism.

The first of these is the Descriptive. For this you write a précis of the plot of the book—which doesn't, of course, mean that you have to read the whole book. All you have to do is to skim the first half and write an outline of the plot up to the point where you left off. You then say that to divulge how the story ends would spoil it for the author's countless admirers, adding (to spike the guns of carping persons who might otherwise object that you hadn't criticized the book at all) that it is an excellent story, or a very indifferent story.

The second and the third kinds are for the more advanced critics, who have gained enough assurance to deal with any book, from the latest novel to a definitive work on Ancient Greek Civilization. The second kind is the Hagiological, and the third the Abusive.



Much the same rules apply to each, except that the second kind should be practised with less discrimination than the third. In neither should you allow yourself to be deterred by ignorance, and never should you waste your time verifying either the author's statements or your own, possibly erroneous, convictions. If you are a Hagiologist, the author will be gratified by your praise (always supposing that he reads your review), and the people you are writing for won't know any better than you do. If you are an Abuser, it is rather more difficult, for in the case of the book which deals with a specialized subject you must take care to condemn it only on general grounds, such as saying that it is dull, or has too many footnotes, or hasn't convinced *you*. In neither case is it necessary to go into detail. Do not, for instance—supposing you should recognize them—say anything about the style or technique. These are very unimportant matters, and won't interest Mr. and Mrs. Littleman in the least.

The book dealing with Ideas can be regarded by the Critic as a piece of cake. If the ideas happen to coincide with your own, and the author is not a political opponent of the organ which employs you, you can spread yourself in encomiums, though this won't be such fun as when the author's ideas aren't yours, and the policy of your

organ is to suppress him. You can then work off any personal spite you may have against him by writing slightly of his mental capacity and hinting that he is on the verge of senility; or, if you merely disagree with his opinions, you can just condemn his book without reserve. After all, if he's only writing about Ideas, no one can say that you're wrong when you state that these are childish, trashy, laughable, or so boring that they sent you to sleep; and as you won't be called upon to pit your wits against his in public argument, your readers, or hearers, won't have the chance to compare your respective mental powers, and will very likely assume that you must be pretty brainy yourself to have been given the book to review at all.

But this last form of Literary Criticism should not be attempted by the novice who has not entirely shaken off his modesty. Let but a doubt of your competence to criticize the work of a possibly distinguished author creep into your mind and you will find yourself demurring at his conclusions



only in terms verging on the polite, or even the respectful. Don't be afraid of making a fool of yourself! Reflect that you could have written the book much better yourself, if only you had had the time and the inclination for the task; and that the literate won't be listening, if you're speaking on the air, or doing more than glance at your review, if it appears in print; and go right ahead! There will be no reprisals. If the author is young, and struggling, he won't dare to expose your pretensions; and if he is well established he won't think it worth while to do so.

I Want a Nice Book (Evening in a Library)

SHE *knows* the name, it trembles on her lip,
And yet she can recall it only partly.
It might be C. S. Forester's *The Ship*—
Or could it be *The Boat*, by L. P. Hartley?

"I want *That Winter*, can't think who it's by;
Merle Miller? No . . ." says the next dubious comer.
The tide of argument runs very high
Before he gets Frank Sargeson's *That Summer*.

Somerset Maugham's *The Casuarina Tree*?
"It isn't in," the sad librarian states.
The borrower means (they finally agree)
The Jacaranda Tree by H. E. Bates.

They Came to Baghdad nearly leads to blows:
"Agatha Christie? No one of the kind!"
But then *They Went to Portugal*, by Rose
Macaulay, stirs the vague inquirer's mind;

He next discovers that the Priestley play
They Came to a City isn't what he meant,
And settles in the most obliging way
At last for Norman Douglas's *They Went*.

The "Story" titles bring a near-collapse:
"The Something Story." Hardly a helpful lead . . .
Camouflage (Geoffrey Barkas)? Or perhaps
The lady's wish was *Colditz* (P. R. Reid)?

Atom, by J. G. Feinberg? What about
Glasgow (Colm Brogan)? *Brontë* (Margaret Lane)?
Spoletta (J. D. White)? There's dozens out—
Chicago (Ira Morris)? Or again . . .

No, let it go. She merely thought she'd call;
She hadn't noticed it had got so late;
She won't need reading matter after all—
TV transmission starts again at eight.

RICHARD MALLETT

The Literary Situation : A Tragedy

By

WILLIAM GERHARDI

"THE best dialogue, Jack, is talk. You and I, we often talk. It follows that we could write a play."

"Uncommercial, Jack."

"Definitely uncommercial. You and I would

be the sole characters. We should be just ourselves. We subscribe to the same prejudices. We are dressed by the same tailor. We are indistinguishable in appearance. And we are both called Jack. It follows that it wouldn't matter which of us said what."

"What do we do?"

"We express our thoughts just as they come. Perhaps on literature. Or, if you like, philosophy. No, I think literature."

"We argue?"

"No: that would make the play commercial. We agree. We are, in intellectual as well as all other respects, identical—except that you, Jack, are perhaps more gullible."

"Yes, Jack."

"The virulent disease which has laid low our literature is a two-fold snobbery caused by the fear of being found wanting (i) in breeding and (ii) in taste."

"Impeccable, this, as a diagnosis; a concrete illustration, though, at this point would not be out of place."

"Certainly. Miss Nancy Mitford

condemns a plutocratic family called Kroesig for saying 'mirror,' and extols an aristocratic family called Radlett for saying 'looking-glass'; thus throwing Bloomsbury and Chelsea into a dither of uneasy doubt about their breeding."

"And yet Miss Mitford, a highly successful manufacturer of predigested commercial fiction, though bred a Radlett, is in literature a Kroesig, with not quite enough poetic breeding to tell her that the arbiters of taste are not the Radletts but the poets, who would ridicule her choice. Not too brutal, this?"

"No, no. You set your mouth and drop your lids as one who knows he must be cruel only to be kind. Or else you say it in a kind of high hoot—to get it over. And now an illustration of the fear of being found wanting in taste."

"It is the precious, now fast becoming popular, delusion that if you rate a writer who makes difficult things seem easy below another who makes easy things look difficult you make yourself appear as being more difficult to please."

"How true. A most attractive young friend of mine, Dolores——"

"Enchanting girl."

"Dolores, the heroine of my next novel, when travelling by Tube hides her Damon Runyon in a Henry James wrapper: 'They will think it more in keeping with my general appearance,' she says."

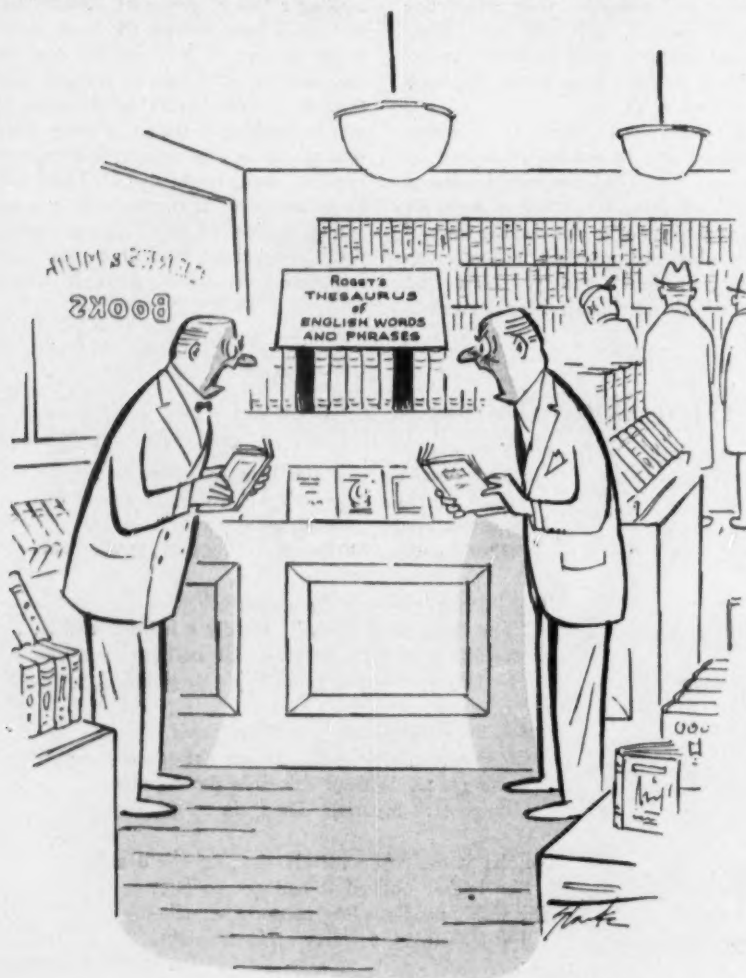
"And they will, of course."

"Now it came to pass that from the land of Canaan there came unto this city one after another three wise men: and ever since literature has never been quite the same. They were Henry James, Logan Pearsall Smith, and the still extant T. S. Eliot. The English, a bashful people not given to self-praise, are unmanned when a transatlantic stranger in their midst begs them to believe how fine they are."

"They bow before the shrine hiding their own shyness, call him a prophet, and make him their patron saint."

"Henry James called his bad habit of writing more and more about less and less 'chemical condensation.'"

"Smith called his books *Trivia*. So nobody noticed that his pretension was



to suppose that only trivial things were in good taste."

"And T. S. Eliot set himself up as a devotional poet. His verse smacks of some regulated irksome duty, like firewatching."

"His theory, in effect, was that poetry was a puzzle. In trying to puzzle it out the reader might read into it some puzzle of his own, and so perhaps get an unforeseen rake-off."

"An authoritarian and disciplinarian, Mr. Eliot unleashed by precept and example a flood of anarchy in which only the strongest swimmer has been able to breast the waves."

"True poetry is like a tiny trigger movement releasing enormous forces. The Eliot school apply enormous force, tugging away at their jammed triggers, to release eventually a puff or whiff of something anthropological at the wrong end of the barrel."

"What is to be done? A literary critic nowadays is just somebody with a typewriter. With, of course, exceptions."

"Of course. At this, we crane our necks over the audience as though looking for and then spotting one or two exceptions. It is always wise. People are so prickly."

"Yes, Jack. The reader, for lack of guidance and by his own blindness, is lost in darkest Africa. Poor, starving, shivering, despairing young writer, where and how can you hope ever to find and rescue your future reader?"

"I have recently been reading *The Remarkable Expedition*, by Olivia Manning, the story of Stanley's rescue of Emin Pasha from equatorial Africa, a book now out of print. It conjures up in my mind an allegory, a literary parable of a dauntless young writer similarly employed in bullying, with short-lived success, his potential reader into abandoning his tribal gods to follow his own light."

"Blithely he sets out on his trail, perhaps skirting Shavia, on which the sun is swiftly setting, where if he but halt under a tree he will get drenched with every unseasonable claptrap."

"So, keeping due east, he enters Eliota Deserta, renowned for the extreme deference of its inhabitants in proffering to you with earnest mien selected discarded superstitions."

"Onward runs his trek past chattering, self-chuckling Linklateroons to Never-Never Charlesmorganland, where the



"Then where do you suggest I should get my opinions?"

curious wish to be Charles Morgan is ever father to the thought."

"Turning his back on the epicurean cannibals of Maughamland, always striking matches to light by way of local colour each other's cigarettes and being fearfully daring and cosmopolitan and knowing in ordering a vermouth at a café, he crosses in a canoe the water-brash of the Waugh-Waugh tribe, whose bite is for all and sundry but whose bark, meant to keep up their self-esteem, is reserved for travellers taking the route via *Debrett*."

"And so, tramping through the vast windy spaces of Sitwellia, noted for its marvellous cacti and even more marvellous mirage, he finally arrives at Capo Verde, with its converts all bent double under the eminently marketable commodity of guilt."

"Here he finds his reader who, like Emin Pasha after being rescued by Stanley, quietly again slinks back to Africa."

"And we should perhaps round off our parable by pointing out that writers we could not here include may consider themselves, if they so wish, as having received an honourable mention."

"I suppose we crane our necks over the audience with a kind of T. S. Eliot

smile falling heavily among the bric-à-brac."

"Not too heavily."

"No: just as though in recognition of a few honourable mentions."

"Yes. But shouldn't we have changed the set at the parable of darkest Africa?"

"Certainly."

"For some appropriate scenery representing, at its hottest, equatorial Africa."

"No. That would have made the play commercial. Say rather for a background of gorgeously irrelevant Venetian palaces, complete with gondolas on a canal lapping around the stage almost within reach of our two chairs, but just not close enough to wet our feet."

"M'm . . . liable, this, to send up cost of production. Steeply, I dare say."

"I dare say. Absolutely infuriating to the management."

"And the backers."

"And the backers. Not our worry, though."

"No. And what then? How do we end our play?"

"Oh, we just sit quietly, facing the footlights, and smoke in silence, ruminating yet awhile and smiling subtly to ourselves over the clever things we've said. And then the curtain very quietly comes down."

Wilfred's Embarrassing Moment
 Wilfred is the only one in *Hugh A Gol* who is

Dancing Grandfather
—CRATHORN, who is
Twice World's Dopey (Howe)
and N. Ireland, Saturday at
the illness of Aunt Matimer, in-
terdict personal the term. As
usual M.C. he spends an every
evening off the ballroom Ro-
hams. M.C. of old-time tanc-
hams, "jolly things along," he
has to be very dance.
Crathorn, known as "The Oze"
leads the dances with "The Oze"
been married twenty-eight
grandchildren. "Oze"
"base"

TYPE

PUNCH, April 28 1954

a.
Parsons P.
32 Devonshire
548 Upper ...
Parsons 30 Arden
Parsons O.57 Gloucester
Parsons G.
1 Parkside ...
Parsons G. A.56 Llan...
Parsons Garage, Abert...
Parsons Card, S... way B...
Parsons C. E. K...
Parsons G. K.36 ...
Parsons E. E.21 ...
Parsons J. H.14 ...
26 Magdalen...
Parsons Geoff...
28 Connaught...
Parsons G. Geo...
Parsons Geo... Sh...
Parson Geo... St...
Parsons Geo... W...
Parsons Geo... H...
Parsons Geo... W...
Parsons Geo... H...
306 Southern...
Parsons George...
Parsons G. Eustace...
218 Holmedale...
Parsons G. V...
17 Cranleigh par...
Parsons G. F.8 Sil...
Parsons G. F.77 & G...
Parsons G. 1.63 King...
Parsons G. J...
7 Laigley ...
545 Woodrose hill Kenton Harrow...
Parsons G. 1.58 El...
Parsons Gladys E. Crowland & W...
Parsons G. P. Devon close Kenle...

"That's"
PALMS ON
PALMS ON
There'd I
Twenty
SWIFT
SHEPHERD
SALMON
BAYONNE
MALDEN
BAYWATER
BURGH H
ASHLEIGH
SPRINGS
NEWELL ADZOTT
FERRIS
TUDOR
STROUTH
SLIP RUSSELL
RADCLIFFE
LIVINGTON
HARROW WORDSWORTH
HADDEN
HOUSE
MIDWAY WATERFOOT
WICKHAMFIELD

Kent. Fair blows the wind for France; blow, gentle gale,
Till Edmund be arrived for England's good!
Nature, yield to my country's cause in this
A brother? no, a butcher of thy friends!
Proud Edward, dost thou banish me thy presence?

Enter young CLAUDIO, disguised

Y. Mer. Hollie, who saileth here?
Is't you, my lord?

Kent. No, sir, 'tis I;—

But hath thy potion wrought so happy?

Y. Mer. It hath, my lord;—I have heard of it
I thank them, gave me life;—

But hath your grace got your old grace?

Kent. Fear it not.

Enter QUEEN MARGARET and KING EDWARD.
Q. Isab. Ah, my lord, how glad am I to see you in France!
 The lords are craved to see you, and to tell you all.
 What shall we do?
P. Edw. Madam, I will be glad to see all that will,
 And please my father well when a time shall be.
 For all my uncles friends are in France.
 I warrant you, I'll win half France as quickly;
 'A loves me better than the child of Spencers.
Q. Isab. Ah, boy, thou art deceived.
 To think that we can yet be drawn together;
 No, no, we are too far. Unkind Valois!
 Unhappy Isabel! when France rejects,
 Whither, oh, whither dost thou bend thy steps!

Zabawa karabinem
9-letnia Wanda
6-letniego brata Stefa.

znego - w Polsce zmierzają do
Polsce i zrównania i że stopa
tytuła polityka ów dąży przy-
najważniejszych artykułów pien-
robków. Są to także k...

na kosztach 5 zł. W tym celu
Zwyzkując natomiast ciekawość
ny artykułów kolekcji, w tym
pieprzu czarnego 1.200 zł.
si. kawy — 500 zł., kakao — 250
zł.

800 zł gabardinowe 3.500 zł Ko-

szusa przystaje 40 do 300 zł. ale-
120 zł. - 60 zł. alimow-
120 zł. - 60 zł. alimow-
szusa przystaje 190 do 25 zł.
Trzecie 400 do 900 zł. buty
pracy 100 do 500 zł. Letnie an-
tofie - 150 zł.

Ceny ogólnie w sklepach:
Imbiery 100 do
palto, liche - 120 zł. - 2.500
nowe palto damskie - 2.500
kita - 1.500 zł. - 2.500 zł. - 2.500 zł.
135 do 400 zł. - 2.500 zł.
damskie kosztują 700 - 2.500 zł.
bukici na drewniaraj podczerw-
- 80 zł. kapelusze - 180 zł. pa-
ra podczoch - 80 zł. nylondy -
200 zł. Daścinie bukici (dla
daścia de 8 lat) 120 zł. dla
dziećki w wieku od 14 do 18 lat

...a strychu...
...dował...
...atka z os...
...Czesław...
...fi, że zas...
...bezpiecz...
...stwa, wyja...

**Wpływy
komunistyczne**

...pracy biurowej
...warszawa. Praca w Krajowi-
...alarm, domowa, nie ma
...stylu pracy, takich in-
...ciach, jak w in-
...metoda, metoda

aparcia trud widać
kół zamów
separnie no
działka powa
za wartają
munistycznym
adnego uszan
ym układzie s
liniarz pracy Śr
łow rządy dla ra
rasowani
podjęt

Wzrostek na str. 1-2

Poinformowane koleś twierdzą, że nadto, że zeznawcy pracują w zastanawiającym, jaki sposób rząd mógłby chronić...
rodowa przed działalnością k...
nistów, którzy mimo że nie :

parcia wśród większości e
ków swichków zawodowy
potrafił. Pewnie sobie v
dnienia pracownicz
wiązkowe powołnie
na warstajacy
munistycznym, m'
mładnego ustań
m układzie m.
pracy Sir Walt
sły dziś rano s
radowi g
podjaci

6) Set (cast in Linotype E.) Line-
ung des Buchdrucks mit beweglichen L-
ichtigen Ereignissen in der Geschichte
originalgetreue Vervielfältigung

...and; but a bird—the end.
...as particular bird, high
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...nized whirring of wings,
...ance round, and started fly
...a strength at the window
...a of them: two skyw
...and immovable: time
...ow hurtled through th
...room air, crashed again
...and fell to the floor. A
...moment of stunned silen
...At first the last st
...ere, with he
...and over her head
...try to open the f
...quietly, rapidly, w
...creature more.
...The children heard
...ran in. Sh
...where you saw. Don't
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...knock-knee to leade
...a pigtails
...and utterly surpr
...two clutched
...woman—
...Suddenly
...and put her
...ing, "I
...and with gl
...The bird, exhausted
...bell in a green, her
...see the bird's
...-flour against the small
...children had been
...did not have ridden the waves
...ch rose in the room like
...bravely, the

a heap
By the
had beco-
so far as
Helen had
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lonely. It's
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quenced ad-
her in-
But that first
stern enough
children had
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she fail
"I"
Helen had
seriously; it
con-
sions. "I'm
weakly."
"Fred shook
"I was
I burn swallow
please." They
from the mov-
a week before
ing light.
"It wasn't."
Fred snif-
sociologica-
lar myths
"We'll
"

Valmouth Revisited

By JOCELYN BROOKE

"YOU'VE heard, I presume," Mrs. Thoroughfare obliquely queried, spitting with faultless aim into an *art nouveau* cuspidor engraved with "scenes" from the life of St. Laura de Nazianzi, "about poor Parvula?"

Lieutenant Whorwood, perched diffidently upon a cinquecento cassone said to have "belonged" to Lucrezia Borgia, groomed fitfully his toupet.

"They tell me," he diffusely rejoined, "that she's to give a Talk, next week, on the *Third*—a little *conférence*, apparently, upon the recent works of Dr. Kinsey. Coming from her, one would have supposed any such discussion to be supererogatory."

"And that's what I think, too," Mrs. Thoroughfare agreed, casting a troubled glance at a somewhat invocative "nude"

by Francis Bacon displayed prominently above the fireplace.

"Father Colley-Mahoney insists, of course, that she has latent proclivities."

"One only wishes," retorted Mrs. Thoroughfare, with a mirthless laugh, "that they had *remained* latent."

"Nowadays, certainly with those zip-suits of hers (not to mention her unhappy penchant for the G.I.s at Valopolis), she's becoming altogether too ultramontane. Poor Birdie Shamefoot was telling me that her behaviour at the Strangers' Hotel is a source of perpetual confusion (and indeed of scandal) to the *indigènes*."

Mrs. Thoroughfare looked alarmed. "Is Mrs. Shamefoot here again?"

"*En villegiature* from Ashringford—I glimpsed her, briefly, in the cocktail-bar, wearing the oddest of hats and looking quite green with *Angst*."

"Her metabolism, they say, is giving cause for anxiety."

"I heard it was politics."

"This Flogging Bill, of course, would not leave her unmoved—particularly as her husband is *himself* a Conservative whip."

"Her passion for commemorating herself remains insatiable, I understand."

"Oh, what's her newest *béguin*?"

"She won't rest now till she's included in those new mosaics at the National Gallery."

"I should have thought she'd have objected to being trodden on."

"Exactly. I should find it most humiliating. Only the other day, having popped in (as I so often do) to tidy my hair, I tripped and fell *à plat ventre*, right on top of poor Lord Russell. To see his face glaring up at one, daubed as it was with plebeian footprints, deprived one of any feeling one might *once* have had for metaphysics."

Mrs. Thoroughfare caressed with voluptuous detachment a small *terre cuite* depicting the amorous transports of an octopus. "The Strangers", I'm told, is crowded to bursting-point."

"Half Ashringford seems to be here, recovering from an epidemic of hyperaesthesia—not to mention the innumerable refugees from Pisuega. Only this morning Madame Wetme was recounting to me her sufferings under the Muscovite occupation. It seems that the 'People's Government' deprived her at one stroke of her confessor and of her manicurist."

"Doubtless Valmouth air will benefit her condition."

"Centenarians, hereabouts, seem to be as numerous as ever."

"Father Colley tells me that the flood of congratulatory telegrams from Buckingham Palace has lately threatened to disorganize completely the local postal services."

"Indeed? Mrs. Shamefoot, of course, swears by the climate: she declares she feels quite eighty-five years younger after a week at the Strangers'."

"It seems that Mistinguet has engaged a room for the winter months."

"Oh, how wise. I remember so well (do you?) the summer that Bernard



Shaw was here: a mere stripling of seventy-odd in *those* days, of course."

"Dr. Dee begged him to settle here permanently, but alas quite in vain."

"He might have been with us yet."

"His death was certainly a loss to letters—though Eulalia, I fear, would hardly agree," Mrs. Thoroughfare cogently commented, her eyes straying with a humorous imprecision towards the "Portrait of Mrs. Patrick Campbell" by Sir Victor Vatt.

"She would hardly have found him *simpatico*."

Mrs. Thoroughfare made a grimace. "She dates her old age, so she says, from that ghastly day she encountered him in the hotel lift at Sandwich."

"I'm told her latest *culte* is for Winsome Brookes, the composer."

Mrs. Thoroughfare fetched a sigh. "Eulalia's incorrigible, I fear—and Mr. Brookes, I'm sorry to say, gives her *every* encouragement."

"Apparently there's no truth in the rumour that he's to be appointed Master of the Queen's Musick?"

"Oh, none."

"He looks so *staid*, nowadays, doesn't he? Birdie tells me he's quite abjured the Party."

"Oh, irrevocably—the Left Wing is anathema to him. One can't deny that *outwardly* the change is for the better."

"His 'proletarian' phase in the 'thirties never *really* suited him, of course—those open shirts and corduroys . . ."

"And those extraordinarily extraordinary friends."

"And his habit, do you remember, of calling everybody *chum*?"

"Happily he seems quite reformed."

"One would presume so, from the *chapeau melon* and the rolled umbrella. He's at work, I hear, upon a new opera; the libretto's to be by Sartre, and it's to have its first performance, apparently, in the chapter-house at Ashringford. The overture is quite extraordinary—it's scored for seven electric drills and a cinema organ. Poor Birdie Shamefoot seems quite terrified lest it should bring down the cathedral a *second* time."

Mrs. Thoroughfare expectorated with less than her usual precision. "Eulalia," she averred, "is determined—believe it or not—to be there."

"I hear she seldom misses a first night nowadays."

Mrs. Thoroughfare blanched. "Her



"Macbeth does murder sleep . . ."

behaviour in the crush-bar, at the first night of *Billy Budd*, had to be *seen* to be believed."

"According to Birdie, she spends most of her afternoons at the Odeon in New Valmouth."

"Her passion for Rita Hayworth appears to be quite incurable . . . She's down there, I believe, at this moment—and quite against the advice of Doctor Dee."

"He fears, no doubt, that she may 'pick up' something?"

"Precisely . . . With so much hyperaesthesia about, one cannot be too careful—quite *apart* from the fact that poor Eulalia, with her glowing artist's soul—"

But the entrance of Mrs. Hurstpier-

point herself, arrayed in a striking *costume de cinéma*, trimmed with black cocks' feathers and sprigs of belladonna, put an end to the conversation.

"Eulalia!"

"My little Lizzie . . . I suppose you've heard?"

"Heard *what*, Eulalia?"

"About poor Parvula . . . It seems that the *Terzo* has positively forbidden her, at the last moment, to give vent to her lucubrations. They say—"

But the strictures of the Third Programme must remain, alas, unrecorded, for at that moment the *châtelaine* of Hare-hatch House, overcome by the first distressing symptoms of hyperaesthesia, fell forward with a convulsive twitter to the floor.

SHORTER NOTICES

QUENTIN
BRAKE

"In 'The Bent and the
Berserk' Mr. Nigel Bodley
has written a . . .



. . . first novel of some promise. He . . .



. . . is certainly not afraid of
tackling a really man-sized
novel. He has command of . . .



. . . a swiftly moving narrative. . .



. . . and brings his work
to a neat conclusion.



The book is handsomely
bound and printed by
Quivis and Hodge . . .



. . . and whatever minor
criticisms there are to be made,
we may safely recommend this
new volume to all lovers of the
novel as . . .



. . . intensely readable."

Battles Long Ago

Pinorman. Richard Aldington. Heinemann, 12/6

THE feelings of the reader on closing Mr. Richard Aldington's book might be compared with those of someone who has incurred a cold in the eye by peeping through a keyhole to observe some interesting though not specially edifying scene. There is, in other words, an aftermath of undoubted malaise, even though one may admit that it was worth it. Some might wish that people—especially authors—did not behave just in that sort of way, but at the same time we all know they do; and Mr. Aldington gives a very convincing account of their goings-on, not sparing himself in the general picture.

The title is a portmanteau-word, made up from the names "Pino" and "Norman," for these are recollections of the writer, Norman Douglas, the Italian bookseller, Pino Orioli, and, to a lesser degree, of Charles Prentice, a London publisher. "This is not," as the blurb states with restraint, "a biography nor an obituary tribute." It certainly is not the latter. In fact it might be fairly described as an analysis of the things that Mr. Aldington disliked most about Norman Douglas.

At least that is how the latter part of the book inclines. As with most stories of its period, we reach D. H. Lawrence in the end; and all the inevitable rows and unpleasantness which that unhappy man always brought in his wake. However, that is to anticipate the course of the recollections, which begin with some account of Orioli's career.

He was born in humble circumstances near Bologna, and by devious means established himself in the rare book market. An amusing, garrulous, impish character, well known in bohemian London and the Anglo-Italian circles of Florence, he became a lifelong friend of Norman Douglas. Orioli is known as the author of several works, of which *Adventures of a Bookseller* (1938) is particularly enjoyable. There now appears to be good reason to suppose that Douglas virtually wrote these Orioli books himself, from material supplied to him by Orioli.

Douglas, Orioli, Prentice and Mr. Aldington did a good deal of travelling, corresponding, and general hobnobbing together. Inevitably there were certain jealousies and ill-feelings, all recorded here in considerable detail. Since these discords are undoubtedly entertaining to read about, it would be priggish to



take exception to them; though at times Mr. Aldington's rather blustering style does not seem quite the medium for reporting such minutiae.

Douglas—insists Mr. Aldington—had undesirable habits, he was stingy, he was too fond of talking about being a gentleman, his intellectual interests were too limited, he overworked his own favourite literary clichés, he did not really like the best cooking, and he preferred indifferent Italian white wine. No doubt it would be hard to deny that there is some truth in this indictment. Yet the more incensed Mr. Aldington becomes with the injustices and shabby treatment to which he and others had to submit from Douglas, the more, for some paradoxical reason, one feels a sneaking sympathy for Douglas in these dealings.

Finally there was the great Maurice Magnus row. Magnus, it will be remembered, a scallywag of the first water, served in the Foreign Legion and subsequently committed suicide. He was a common friend of Douglas and D. H. Lawrence, and he left his memoirs of life in the Legion to Lawrence, who published them in due course with a long introduction.

I think it arguable that Lawrence's account of Magnus is the best thing he ever wrote. It is conceived with extraordinary vigour and vividness, even when it brings about effects hardly intended by the writer himself: for example, the incomparable anecdote—something in the Cervantes manner—in which the penniless Magnus, having borrowed some money from Lawrence, himself very hard up, went first class on the boat to Malta (on the ground that he *always* went first class when he travelled), while the enraged Lawrence,

travelling second, saw Magnus, from the bridge, pointing out his humbler friends to the captain.

The result of the Magnus piece was the publication of Douglas's reprimand to Lawrence in his pamphlet, *A Plea for Better Manners*. Mr. Aldington attributes this squib to Douglas's annoyance at being "put into" Lawrence's novel, *Aaron's Rod*. Probably Douglas was irritated by that. Where one cannot agree with Mr. Aldington is in finding the dialogue of *Aaron's Rod* well written. At least the fairly copious examples he quotes here seem flat-footed to a degree.

ANTHONY POWELL

Early Realists

Rebels and Ancestors. Maxwell Geismar. W. H. Allen, 25/-

The third volume in Mr. Geismar's vast study of the novel in America is given to the early realists, Frank Norris, Stephen Crane, Jack London, Theodore Dreiser and Ellen Glasgow—the last a self-involved ironist of the Old South who seems to have been admitted here by mistake. Norris, Crane and London all wrote at great speed, carelessly, mixing interesting work with rubbish (London published fifty books in the forty years of his life). Mr. Geismar trudges through their work solemnly, popping in bits of psycho-analytical interpretation and referring darkly to the "Darwinian cosmos" of the period.

He writes with irritating pretentiousness and with a distressing use of psychological and political jargon, but his judgments are often acute. Much the best study is that of Dreiser, an ugly duckling who really did turn into a swan. This is a deeply searching reevaluation of a novelist who has been much misunderstood. Mr. Geismar makes a strong case for the view that *The Financier* and *The Titan* are major novels of character as well as scaring attacks on Chicago financiers in their most obviously lycanthropic period.

J. S.

Essays in Satire. Ronald Knox. Sheed and Ward, 8/6

It is a pity that these reprinted pieces are not dated, if only to show how undated they are. The preface, it is true, gives 1911 for "Studies in the Literature of Sherlock Holmes," which must be about the earliest and neatest puncturing of the learned Holmes-worshipper, but for the most part we are guided only by once-topical references to, say, Felix the Cat, or the Savoy Band.

Several targets still drawing the

satirist's fire sustained their early wounds in these pages—among them the psychoanalysts and the B.B.C.—and it is a little sad, in a way, to find them still living and breathing after all this time. As a study not only in satire but in suspense (a quality not usually associated with essays) the piece entitled "The New Sin" is alone worth the price of the book. J. B. B.

Jerusalem Journey: Pilgrimage to the Holy Land in the Fifteenth Century. H. F. M. Prescott. *Eyre and Spottiswoode*, 18/-

With an amused and elegant erudition Miss Prescott presents the spectacle of the fifteenth-century tourist trade, and shows that the Venetians managed the complexities and complications of conducted tours with the financial acumen of a contemporary travel agency. Brother Felix, materially endowed by his fellow Dominicans, made two Holy Land cruises, and recorded every delight, mishap and mystery for his Brothers' contemplative enjoyment.

Greedy, inquisitive, gullible and self-conscious, Brother Felix was well equipped for adventure, and feared neither the treacherous storm at sea nor the grasping Saracen: the tipping menace upset many a Christian pilgrim. Blessed with a catholic adaptability Brother Felix observed all with the fervour of an anthropologist and the bemused wonderment of a provincial abroad coping with artistic landmarks and the material needs of native guides. Every praise must be awarded to Miss Prescott for introducing to the general public a giant among tourists; one whose robust enjoyment of personality and place establishes him as a travelling Boswell. K. D.

George Herbert. Margaret Bottrall. *Murray*, 15/-

John Donne has come to loom so large in the poetic firmament of the seventeenth century that criticism has tended to neglect its less refulgent luminaries. Mrs. Margaret Bottrall, turning on one of these a sympathetic and discerning eye, has been at pains to disengage George Herbert from the great dean's orbit. She justly insists that he has no place in the metaphysical galaxy, being utterly without the questioning spirit which that overworked term implies. The antitheses in his poetry spring from no philosophical dubiety but from his complete acceptance of what Mrs. Bottrall calls "the central paradox of Christianity."

His hesitations were not of faith but

of conduct, for it was long before he could bring himself to renounce his "gentle humor for cloaths and Court-like company." So exclusively is he a religious poet that it is easy to forget that his legendary ministry at Bemerton lasted less than three years. Mrs. Bottrall has retold his interesting story with much of Izaak Walton's original charm, and has examined his verse and prose with insight and sense. F. B.

The World is Six Feet Square. Alan Caillou. *Peter Davies*, 12/6

As escape stories go this is no thriller: it moves slowly, evenly, without heroics or any real climax, and has nothing in common with what Stephen Leacock called "the blood and guts school" of war books. Even so, it is full of interest. The war in North Africa and Italy flashes and rumbles in the distance, while the two British officers, captured by the Italians, stagger from prison to prison, lost, forgotten, helplessly weak and mortally afraid. In their misery they quarrel (politely), thief, lie, attempt a little wry humour, and accept a hand-to-mouth animal existence with pardonable resignation.

Their exploit rings true, and so does the detailed description of life in the civilian prison of Gaeta, where conversation between cells usually takes the form of a melancholy guessing-game—"Ho, Pietro! What are you doing?" "Just sitting. What are you doing?" "Guess, Pietro..." "Drinking your coffee?" "No, Pietro." "Sitting on the cesso?" "No, Pietro..."; and where five centimetres of pencil exchange for half a stale bun. An intelligent and unusual book this, full of good reading.

A. B. H.

Guttersnipe. Little Novels by Gerald Kersh. Heinemann, 10/6

Mr. Kersh is nothing if not exuberant; indeed, if he were not exuberant he would be nothing. The fact is that all this "clever stuff," this jokey and romantic sentiment, is a cheap-jack's spiel which enables the author to slip us a very small packet indeed. When we move away we're likely to find nothing inside but a little dust, the corpse of an overworked idea. Nevertheless, the spiel draws a crowd, and I do not doubt Mr. Kersh knows his public.

One must certainly admire his boldness. Would it seem possible, after all we have suffered from novel, stage and screen, that anyone would try to re-tell

the story of a poor boy with a genius for music who, after years of study, painfully paid for, sacrifices his Great Gift for a Worthless Woman? Mr. Kersh re-tells it, and not particularly well, either. The other stories are a trifle less threadbare, but I doubt whether Mr. Kersh, or anyone else, will get much more wear out of them. O. M.

The Second Tree from the Corner. E. B. White. *Hamish Hamilton*, 12/6

This is a handsome collection of pieces in every vein, from poems to autobiography, from criticism to fiction, from parody to a wistful account of the death of a pig. There are also many paragraphs written for the *New Yorker's* "Notes and Comment" pages, many of them using prose of extreme, delicate skill to veil with superficial comedy a deep uneasiness about the fate of the world or some equally weighty subject. This mood is characteristic, and there are hints of it in every style represented here. It makes the book stimulating as well as enjoyable, and it is preservative: one will re-read no less for the implications than for the continually entertaining, astringent brilliance of the writing.

R. M.

Blaze of the Sun. Jean Hougroun. *Hurst and Blackett*, 12/6

M. Jean Hougroun, a thirty-one-year-old Frenchman recently back from Indo-China, has published a novel a year for four successive years about that unhappy country. One of these (the publishers do not specify which) won the 1953 French Academy's *Grand Prix du Roman*.

Blaze of the Sun shows his appetite for the landscape, intrigues, social recreations and local ladies still unsatisfied. Indeed, M. Hougroun writes about Indo-China, and Saigon in particular, very much as H. E. Bates did about Burma. He has the same sensuous interest in scenery, a similar skill in evoking the colour and smell of exotic backgrounds, whether jungle or urban. In part this book deals with a Viet-Minh ambush of a French convoy, and the imprisonment of the central character, Lastin, a doctor turned truck-driver, with a French civilian and his beautiful Annamite wife, all of whom are brutally treated. In part it is a rewardingly expressive triangular love story. On both levels it is skilful, readable, and informative, though just not in the top class. Mr. Mervyn Savill has translated very satisfactorily. A. R.





"It's been done."

A Journalist Looks Back

I Remember the Times

By CLAUD COCKBURN

NOTHING sets a person up more than having something turn out just the way it's supposed to be, like falling into a Swiss snowdrift and seeing a big dog come up with a little cask of brandy round its neck.

First time I travelled on the Orient Express I was actually accosted by a quite well-known international spy. When I talked with Al Capone there was a sub-machine gun poking through the transom of the door behind him. Ernest Hemingway spoke out of the corner of his mouth. In an Irish castle a sow ran right across the baronial hall. The first Cabinet Minister I met told me a horrible lie almost immediately. These things were delightful, and so

was the first view of *The Times* office in London.

In the Foreign Editorial Room a sub-editor was translating a passage of Plato's *Phædo* into Chinese—for a bet. Another sub-editor had declared it could not be done without losing certain nuances of the original. He was dictating the Greek aloud, from memory.

That very first evening I saw the chief sub-editor hand a man a slip of Reuter's Agency "tape," with two lines on it, saying the Duke of Gloucester, on world tour, arrived Kuala Lumpur, held reception. It would run to about half an inch of space, and on some newspapers, I dare say, might have been got ready for the printer in a matter of

minutes. I was glad to see nothing of that kind happen here.

The sub-editor, a run-of-the-mill *Times* type, who at the age of twenty had written the definitive Grammar of an obscure oriental language, and gone on to be the man behind Atatürk, or someone of that calibre, took the slip of paper first to the library, and then to the Athenæum, where he used to go for a cold snack during the dinner hour.

His work on it was completed only just in time for the ten o'clock edition. A tricky job. "There are," he explained, "eleven correct ways of spelling 'Kuala Lumpur,' and it was difficult to decide which should receive the, as it were, imprimatur of *The Times*."

It made me feel fearfully superficial, reminding me of oral examination by Oxford dons when I was competing for a Travelling Fellowship. The Chief of them had said "I see you have resided in the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg."

"For eight days."

"And what did you gather of the state of affairs?"

I got off a piece about the International Steel Cartel, which had its headquarters there. Meaty stuff, I opined, after only eight days. The chief don had waved it aside as trivial froth. "No, no," he said, "I mean, what did you gather of the divergences, between north and south, in their system of land tenure?"

All foreign correspondents believe sub-editors to be malevolent troglodytes, happiest when casually massacring the most significant lines of an informed, well-balanced dispatch. Sub-editors believe foreign correspondents to be flibbertigibbets, uselessly squandering enormous expense accounts; lazy and

verbose, and saved only from making fools of themselves in print by the vigilance of the staff in the foreign room.

However, *The Times* people proved genial, and made kindly efforts to put me at my ease. One told me that, although the London climate was lethal, one could prolong life by getting up very early three times a week and travelling to Southend for a brisk twenty minutes' walk on the sea front. "And, of course," he said, rather mysteriously, "being in the train so much gives more time for thinking and reading."

I said I hoped to be leaving, shortly, for New York. He was sincerely sorry for me—such an awfully long way from healthy Southend.

It was a rule on *The Times* that a person hoping to be a foreign correspondent must spend at least six months on a provincial newspaper, work for a longish period on the home side of *The Times*, then work indefinitely in the foreign room, and ultimately, perhaps, fill some vacancy abroad.

The fact that I had done none of these things worried me. I feared someone would notice, and pack me off to Newcastle instead of New York. I did observe that hardly anyone else seemed to have gone through the proper hoops either. Finally I asked a High Priest about it. His reply was an exhilarating example of what may perhaps be called *The Times* spirit.

"That," he said, "is our rule. Unwritten, but I hope you take it no less seriously for that."

"Not at all," I said hastily. "I just wondered . . ."

"And a very sound rule it is," said the High Priest sternly. "Very sound indeed. Remember that."

I never heard the rule mentioned again.

The only hoop I had been through—and that out of turn—was the Berlin office. At first *The Times* people in London had been nervous about having this unknown character sitting there. They sent instructions that I might sit



"Either he's the nucleus of something gigantic or we'll be getting our cupboard back."

at a desk in the outer office and read and make précis of the German newspapers, but on no account write a line. This we treated as just a very sound rule, and I daily wrote small dispatches and left them on the desk of the chief correspondent to be handed over, if approved, to the telephonist who sent all the dispatches of the day on the regular evening subscription call to London.

There was a hitch only once, when Mr. Ebbutt, the regular correspondent, was on holiday and his place taken by a man called Pugg or some similar name. Extensive unrest and street fighting was going on in Berlin at the time. It was a confused situation and many people opposed to the unemployed demonstrators also thought the Prussian police were acting trigger-happy. Pugg, a newcomer, had no doubt it was a straight fight of Law and Order *versus* the licentious mob. Any hesitant angels caught loitering were apt to get a sharp pushing around when Pugg rushed on to the scene.

Irked somewhat by his attitude, I wrote, one afternoon when he was out watching the shooting, the dispatch I conceived Pugg would have written—"From Our Own Correspondent, Rome"—had he been covering events there approximately two thousand years ago. It was a level-headed estimate, studded with well-tried *Times* phrases.

"Small disposition here," cabled this correspondent, "attach undue importance to protests raised certain quarters as result recent episode Colosseum. Ill-informed criticism has fastened upon inclusion lions in general scheme for curbing activities subversive elements. Learned official quarters decision employ lions this purpose taken only after carefullest consideration all factors. Sensational report agitators torn pieces alive deprecated. Emphasized death from lions' blow usually instantaneous thus occurring pretearing pieces. Is natural resentment here of criticism from foreigners without first hand knowledge methods and aims this particular sect. Pointed out firm action definitely eliminated small band extremists whose doctrines might otherwise represent serious threat to authority."

I put it on Pugg's desk. Glancing rapidly through it after a tiring day, and seeing familiar clichés smiling at him



"The Continent! the Continent! must we go to the same old place, year after year?"

from every paragraph, Pugg did not bother to read it properly and passed it, together with his own dispatch, to the telephonist.

By a piece of ill-luck it chanced that *The Times* had recently reorganized its European telephone system, with the result that the Berlin office was used as a relay centre for dispatches from a number of smaller capitals which formerly had communicated direct with London.

The telephonist was already vexed by the extra work involved. Now he came rushing back from the switchboard, waving my dispatch in a mauve fury.

"What's all this?" he shouted. "Are we taking flaming Rome now?"

Mr. Pugg was abominably shocked. I had always hoped to hear someone actually use the phrase "In the worst possible taste." Pugg did. He did his best to bring home to me the appalling character of my action. "Do you appreciate," he said, "that what you have done is to attempt to play a *joke* on *The Times*?"

"We left Mrs. Petrov, in this story, taking tea on the shady verandah of Government House, Darwin. She had changed from her travelling suit to a floral-patterned frock. She even asked for a hairdresser. And then a security blanket was wrapped round her."

Daily Express

Better than red flannel, at that.

The Perfect Gift

After Sir Henry Newbolt

"There could be no more beautifully symbolic gift which one could offer to a young man setting out upon the adventure of life than that of a cup of cold water."—A speaker at the N.U.T. Conference

MY son, the world is almost round.
Your father always found it so.
He used to go by Underground.
The Omnibus was rather slow.
You, too, have come to be a man,
And Nelson's best loved liquor pours
From out that simple watering-can.
Stand up and take it. It is yours.

It is not that he drank the stuff.
His ways were nobler ways than these.
Rather he left behind enough
To fill the Seven Circling Seas.
And Drake who sailed the Spanish Main
And went the way you, too, must go,
He cried "Don't bring me that again,"
And poured it into Plymouth Hoe.

Now strikes the dreadful hour, my son,
That strikes but once for all the Free.
Henceforth the School and you are one,
And what you are the School will be.
"Quicunque vult," the legend's writ,
"Salvare in perpetuum,
Hanc aquam puram bibuit."

The hour for noble deeds hath come.

CHRISTOPHER HOLLIS

Right Dress

By D. F. KARAKA

BOMBAY

MY bearer, Makan Premji, is the current President of the Malabar Hill Bearers Club. In local bearer circles it is equivalent to being President of the Oxford Union. Malabar Hill is really not the hill on which we live. Our house is on the adjoining Cumballa Hill. The Club takes the name of Malabar Hill in much the same way as residents at the Marble Arch end of Edgware Road sport Mayfair telephone numbers.

My bearer achieved this distinction on his own merits. He gives counsel to other bearers in need, a function he performs during my office hours and therefore without the least inconvenience to me. As his employer I have acquired a certain standing in the locality. I also have obligations.

When I happen to be entertaining anyone of recognized social standing such as the American Ambassador, the British Deputy High Commissioner, the French Consul, the Governor of the Reserve Bank, the Financial Adviser to His Exalted Highness the Nizam of Hyderabad or the rich banker Sir Cowasjee Jehanghir, Bart., G.B.E., K.C.I.E., etc., etc., I notice there are one or two helping bearers brought in for the occasion. There is, moreover, no charge whatsoever for such help. They

probably come in to corroborate my bearer's story at the next executive committee meeting of the Bearers Club.

On the other hand, should I be entertaining a troupe of cabaret girls, however attractive, I have noticed that my bearer does all the serving alone. It has always been a mystery to me how, without looking at my diary of engagements, he is able to gauge the quality of my guests. He is even more particular to see that when I am invited out I make the right impression. Some time ago as I came out of my bath before going to one such party, given by an important official of the Consular Corps, I found my dinner suit laid out for me.

Now I clearly remembered the invitation had said: "Dress as you please." My office secretary translated that into the engagement book as "informal." I therefore told Makan to get out my dark-green corduroys and white silk shirt, my suede *chappals* and my demurely-patterned cream silk scarf. Makan is familiar with my wardrobe; he has grown up with it.

I waited with a bath towel wrapped around me while he went into the dressing-room to fetch these things. Nothing happened for quite a while and when Makan returned he was empty handed.

"Where are my clothes?" I said,

raising my voice. I was already late for the party.

Sheepishly he pointed to the dinner suit already laid out. "Master must to wear dress suit," he said. "Big-big peoples is coming to party." He reeled off a dozen names interlarded with prefixes of *sahibs* and *burra-sahibs*. His eyebrows were lifted especially high when he spoke of the "Burra-sahib of Burmah Shell," who was also coming. A *burra-sahib* is one who controls a network of *sahibs* who are important in their own rights.

Having volunteered this information he pointed out that his insistence was due only to the fact that there was just a fortnight to go to election week at the Bearers Club. He was standing for re-election, and to his annoyance the Presidency was being hotly contested this year.

"Socialiss is putting candidate up against to me," he explained.

In the circumstances I had no option. At the party the *Burra-sahib* of Burmah Shell and I were the only two who were dressed in dinner suits.

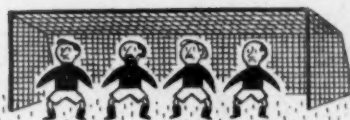
Two weeks later my bearer was elected President of the Malabar Hill Bearers Club for the third time. The Hill was saved for another term of office.

Jai Hind!





CRITICISMS



AT THE PLAY

The Prisoner (GLOBE)

The Teahouse of the August Moon
(HER MAJESTY'S)

The Tempest (OLD VIC)

Waiting for Gillian (ST. JAMES'S)

IN *The Prisoner* BRIDGET BOLAND gives us one answer to the question we so often ask ourselves about police-state trials: namely, that through fatigue, expertly backed by cunning dialectic, the finest mind can be made malleable. Beating and torture play no part in the downfall of her proud and clever Cardinal nor do any of the easy emotional tricks of the stage prison; she has chosen the harder way of convincing us by means only of a prolonged duel of wits between two men. Carried on from session to session (there are ten scenes, divided equally between a cell and an interrogation room) this is very skilfully written, and more interesting for avoiding black and white in character—the Cardinal is secretly ashamed both of his origins and of the extreme coldness of his heart, while instead of being merely a sadist and fanatic his Interrogator is a good doctor manqué, with enough humanity to invite execution in the end rather than go on. One of the fascinations of the duel is to watch the opponents growing almost fond of one another, as each begins to know every cranny in the other's thought.

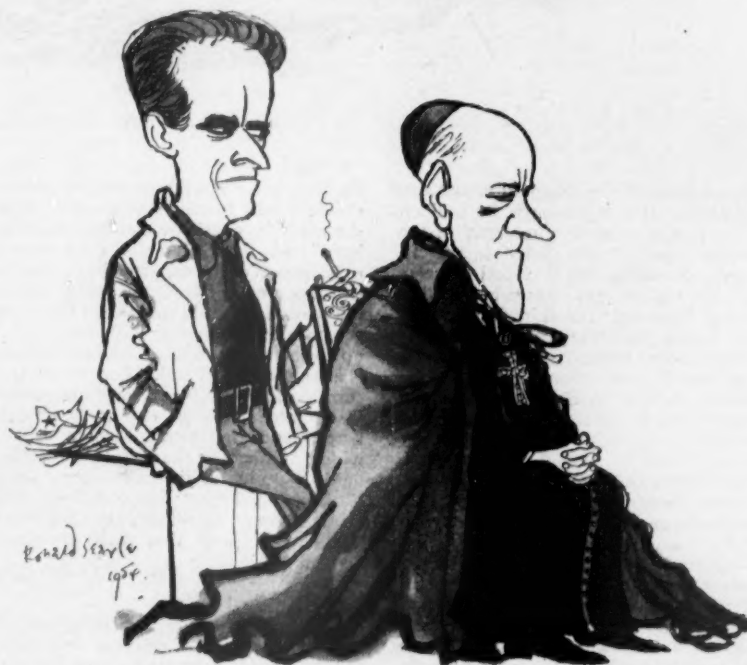
Miss BOLAND is greatly to be praised for her detachment, her refusal of clichés, and the agility of her arguments, but *The Prisoner* would have been a still better play if it had moved us. Even when the Cardinal's mother arrived in a coffin I found I had to keep reminding myself that it was about a man fighting for his life against monstrous injustice, and not about a psychiatrist's consulting-room. Not until the seventh scene is the shattering of the Cardinal's façade allowed to break the flatly episodic pattern, and by then it is too late for sympathy to be engaged. But all the same *The Prisoner* should not be missed. Apart from its intelligence and PETER GLENNVILLE's sensitive production, it is impeccably acted in its three key parts. ALEC GUINNESS gives a beautifully controlled performance as the Cardinal, NOEL WILLMAN catches all the subtle conflict in the Interrogator, and in admirable contrast WILFRID LAWSON as

an old warder is soaked in the grisly humours of the death cell.

The Americans' capacity to satirize themselves and all they hold sacred is something we can envy, and when it is done with the taste, charm and invention of *The Teahouse of the August Moon* we must humbly raise our hats. This delicate theatrical freak survives the crossing of the Atlantic. It is childishly simple, gentle but never maudlin, and almost continuously funny. A guileless American captain, sent to an Oriental village to instil the wisdom of the West with the aid of a foolproof plan from Washington, quickly falls a convert to the local way of life. The school he is supposed to be building turns out a teahouse in which his personal geisha-girl lectures on her profession to what approximates to the Women's Institute; the psychiatrist dispatched to check up on his behaviour proves a thwarted agriculturist who is soon probing the soil in a kimono. Upside down, democracy works

just as well. If there is a fault in the play it lies in too many slow-motion scenes with a furious colonel. The curiously winning flavour owes much to JOHN PATRICK's writing, ROBERT LEWIS's production, and the personalities of three men, WILLIAM SYLVESTER as the captain, LIONEL MURTON as the psychiatrist and ELI WALLACH as the interpreter whose footlight aphorisms remind us that progress has at least as many sides as the Pentagon.

I am all for Caliban—one of the worst-treated property-owners in fiction—and I have a bias against Prospero, an amateur conjurer who grossly abuses his rather flashy powers. But in ROBERT HELPMANN's production of *The Tempest* MICHAEL HORDERN makes unusual sense of Prospero's extraordinary conduct by emphasizing his slowness to forget injury. He also gives him authority and an understanding of poetry; while Caliban comes off poorly, for although RICHARD BURTON puts his case eloquently he is



The Interrogator—MR. NOEL WILLMAN

The Prisoner—MR. ALEC GUINNESS



"I've just had an awful thought."

allowed none of the essential crustacean splendour. It is not enough for Caliban to be merely a younger member of the Othello family, with fishy legs. In scoring a considerable visual success Mr. HELPMANN has remembered that sorcery is on tap; the ship founders on fairy waves, and the feast might have been arranged by the Magic Circle. This is a sound production in which the tricks work, and in CLAIRE BLOOM and JOHN NEVILLE its romance is in good hands.

The heroine of NIGEL BALCHIN's novel, *A Way Through the Wood*, was highly smokable, and she remains so in RONALD MILLAR's adaptation, *Waiting for Gillian*, in spite of all the special pleading of GOOGIE WITHERS. I doubt if many of her type can have survived the passing of the servants' hall. Bored with the country, bored with the dull decent husband she thinks she loves, archaically incompetent, she takes a lover, and a particularly silly one at that. Even at

the end, after a salutary year in prison, she still asks for time to discover what she really is, which we could quite easily have told her. To its conventional examination of the marriage difficulties of two apparently hopeless incompatibles the play adds a mild tincture of ethics, in the problem of whether Gillian shall own up to the accidental manslaughter of her charwoman's husband. Out of all this comes one skilful and exciting scene, made moving in an extremely natural performance by ANNA TURNER as the widow. Otherwise the writing of the play tends to be loose, like its heroine. JOHN MCCALLUM, FRANK LAWTON and NOEL HOWLETT are steadfastly behind Miss WITHERS in parts that make no great demands.

Recommended

Marching Song (St. Martin's) and *A Question of Fact* (Piccadilly), two plays to send you home arguing. And *The Boy Friend* (Wyndham's), a nostalgic musical of the 1920s.

ERIC KEOWN

AT THE PICTURES

Act of Love
The 5,000 Fingers of Dr. T.

IT would be easy to contend that *Act of Love* (Director: ANATOLE LITVAK) is not a true tragedy because the final unhappy separation of the lovers is brought about by sheer bad luck. Indeed, I can imagine some big commercial brain behind the film pointing out this very fact and plaintively demanding why they couldn't have a touch of equally possible good luck at those moments, so that more of the simple-hearted customers should go away happy and send more money to the box-office. If only there had been a more imaginative commanding officer... if only the military police had been prowling a bit farther away... and so on.

But it is also arguable that any happy ending would be false: that with all the good luck in the world this pair of lovers would not have avoided tragedy for long: that it was the very nature of their happiness to be temporary.

The film consists mainly of the story of this war-time episode, as recalled by the man ten years later. In Paris, in 1944, he was a soldier with an office job, who wanted a room of his own for privacy; the girl was homeless and without family or money. A room was available for a husband and wife, and they got it by pretending to be married. Of course they fell in love; but the police made trouble over identity papers, the soldier's C.O. bluffly refused him permission to marry, the girl thought she was deserted . . .

It is all very well done. The film is a Franco-American collaboration: there are more French players than American in the cast, and though IRWIN SHAW wrote the screenplay (from a novel by ALFRED HAYES) most of the technicians are French. And that is precisely the impression that it makes: atmospherically, and above all visually, it is French, but the essence of the story and the dialogue recall Hemingway. KIRK DOUGLAS is the man, DANY ROBIN makes a touching figure of the girl, and there is much first-rate detail, but the picture is rather less emotionally moving than it might be.

That we have not before seen *The 5,000 Fingers of Dr. T.* (Director: ROY ROWLAND)—it was made in 1952—may be the result of somebody's caution. It's unusual, it's fantastic, it's not an ordinary boy-meets-girl story in familiar surroundings, it's not a careful imitation of something that has made money, so (thus runs the usual argument) no one will ever want to pay to see it. Among its songs there are one or two so simply, trivially sentimental in the Disney manner (complete with whistled chorus suggesting those perishing blue birds and other veterans of the Disney charm department) that they seem to have been inserted quite blatantly to make the whole thing more commercial. But I think plenty of people will find most of it as entertaining as I did.

It is ostensibly a story for children, about a nine-year-old's dream of an enormous castle where his piano-teacher, fantastically exaggerated, imprisons five hundred little boys to play (on a piano like two reclining switchbacks) a composition for five thousand fingers. It can, I'm sure, be enjoyed by children on those terms. But much of the dialogue is remarkably amusing even to adults, some of the songs are witty, there is some admirable eccentric dancing, and the whole grotesque fantasy is made comic with intelligence. This is the old



Lisa—DANY ROBIN

Robert Teller—KIRK DOUGLAS

[Act of Love]

German style excellently used in the service of fun instead of horror. TOMMY RETTIG is the nine-year-old hero, and HANS CONRIED's flamboyant performance as the villainous Dr. T. is extremely funny.

Survey

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

New ones in London also include a cheerful well-done comedy, *The Long, Long Trailer*, and a very simple old-fashioned little-orphan-girl story, *Heidi*,

Swiss-made but dubbed within an inch of its life. *The Wages of Fear* or *Le Salaire de la Peur* (24/2/54) and the less brilliant, more superficial *Companions of the Night* or *Les Compagnes de la Nuit* (21/4/54) continue.

Top release is the very gay, very funny *Doctor in the House* (31/3/54). An unassuming little horse-racing picture, *Devil on Horseback* (31/3/54), has a fresh flavour and much excellent detail.

RICHARD MALLETT

ON THE AIR

Dry Easter

ACCORDING to *Radio Times* the Easter Day television play *It Never Rains . . .* was written by a twenty-two-year-old actress during an attack of influenza, has been presented by six repertory companies and "virtually re-written." All this I can well understand. What challenges my credulity is the fact that the piece, re-written or not and in any shape or form, could be accepted by the B.B.C.

A more improbable line in histrionic claptrap it would be difficult to imagine. Take half a dozen sociological plays of the 'thirties (*Love on the Dole*, *The Corn is Green* and so on), mix their more obvious ingredients of plot and character into one Lancashire hot-pot, add a kitchen the



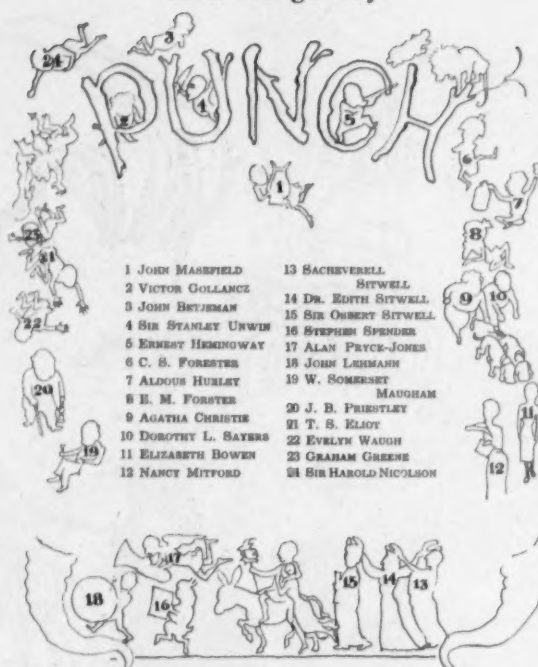
[It Never Rains . . .]

Jo Bolton (Miss Josephine Douglas), Ned Bolton (Mr. Carl Bernard), Jen Bolton (Miss Olga Lindo), Len Jemmett (Mr. Michael Blythe)

Cover Design Key

size of Euston Station, transfer the scene and some of the accents to "the suburbs of an industrial town in Yorkshire," and serve stale over a period of one and a half hours . . . and there you have *It Never Rains* . . . No one in our house is happy: Dad's paralyzed and proud in his wheel-chair; young Milly's going the pace and likely to bring disgrace on the family at any moment: Jo, her sister, is studying medicine, taking in typing, rejecting the advances of Bob, t'boss's son from t'big works; Mum's just mum, long-suffering and benevolently maternal twenty-four hours a day; Bill's a bright lad with hopes of becoming an architect's draughtsman, but he's in financial difficulties, being hounded by a rascally modeller of local community centres; Mrs. Ricketts, the char, spends a lot of time in the cellar with the port (it's an old Yorkshire custom among ordinary folk to stock their cellars w' port); Dr. Loveridge, who ought to have been "struck off" years ago, is never happier than when he is telling his patients that their number is up; Marion, a Canadian schoolmistress, can't resist the charms of young Bill and pursues him relentlessly from room to room . . . and, yes, there is also the man of mystery, the lodger, with a voice like Mr. Eden's and a suit like a matinee idol's.

The setting, designed by Frederick Knapman, was the kitchen of the Boltons' humble abode. And what a kitchen! It contained innumerable doors and windows, a flight of stairs, tables, a range, a telephone (complete with extension), a cluttered mantelpiece and enough free



lebensraum to house the Luton Girls' Choir, the Littlewood Songsters and the entire company of "Quite Contrary."

No attempt had been made to adapt this unwieldy stage setting to television. When mother nipped upstairs with a glass of port for her hard-working daughter she tapped on the door to bring Jo into the kitchen and within range of its cameras. When visitors called—as they did in a steady stream—they entered hatless and coatless, without knocking or apology, and immediately settled themselves in the best chair by the fire. When secrets were being confided—as they

were in a steady stream—interlopers standing six paces distant were considered to be deaf.

The whole play was an insult to Yorkshire and to anyone of average intelligence. Something *must* be done to shake the drama department of Lime Grove out of its deep rut of mediocrity and complacency.

As for the actors, well, the play beat them all. Only Olga Lindo as Jen Bolton and Josephine Douglas as Jo managed to sound sincere through their broad Northern accents, and even their performances suffered from the encircling gloom.

I should add that *It Never Rains* . . . was written by Lynne Reid Banks and produced by Douglas Allen.

Quite the funniest item on TV this last week was the visit to Belle Vue Stadium and the Speedway thrills of the Cock o' th' North cup competition. For half an hour the cameras failed, leaving the viewer with a screened apology and a sound commentary of unparalleled, though, of course, excusable, stupidity. The roar of engines, the frenzied recital of the leaders' names, the background din of amplified song-hits and the shrill cries of the teen-age fans—all this seemed strangely comical as a supper-time serenade. There was one fan who screamed "Challenge him, Arthur, challenge him!" I listened carefully, hoping for a "Challenge him closely, Arthur!" but I had to be content with the less definite injunction.

BERNARD HOLLOWOOD



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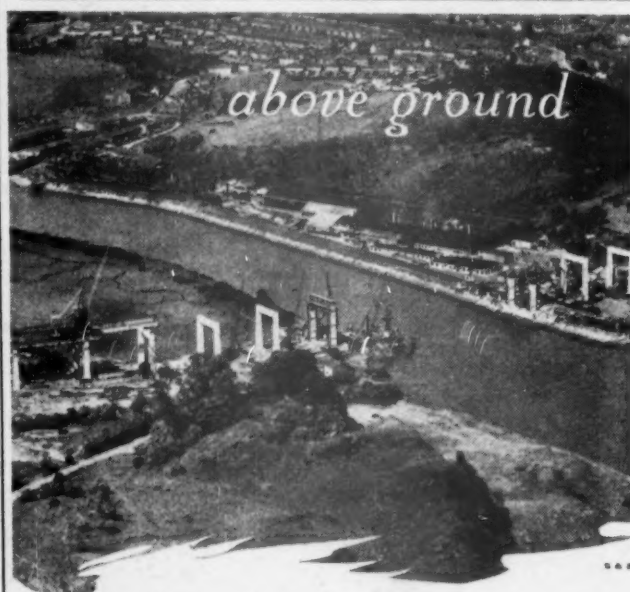
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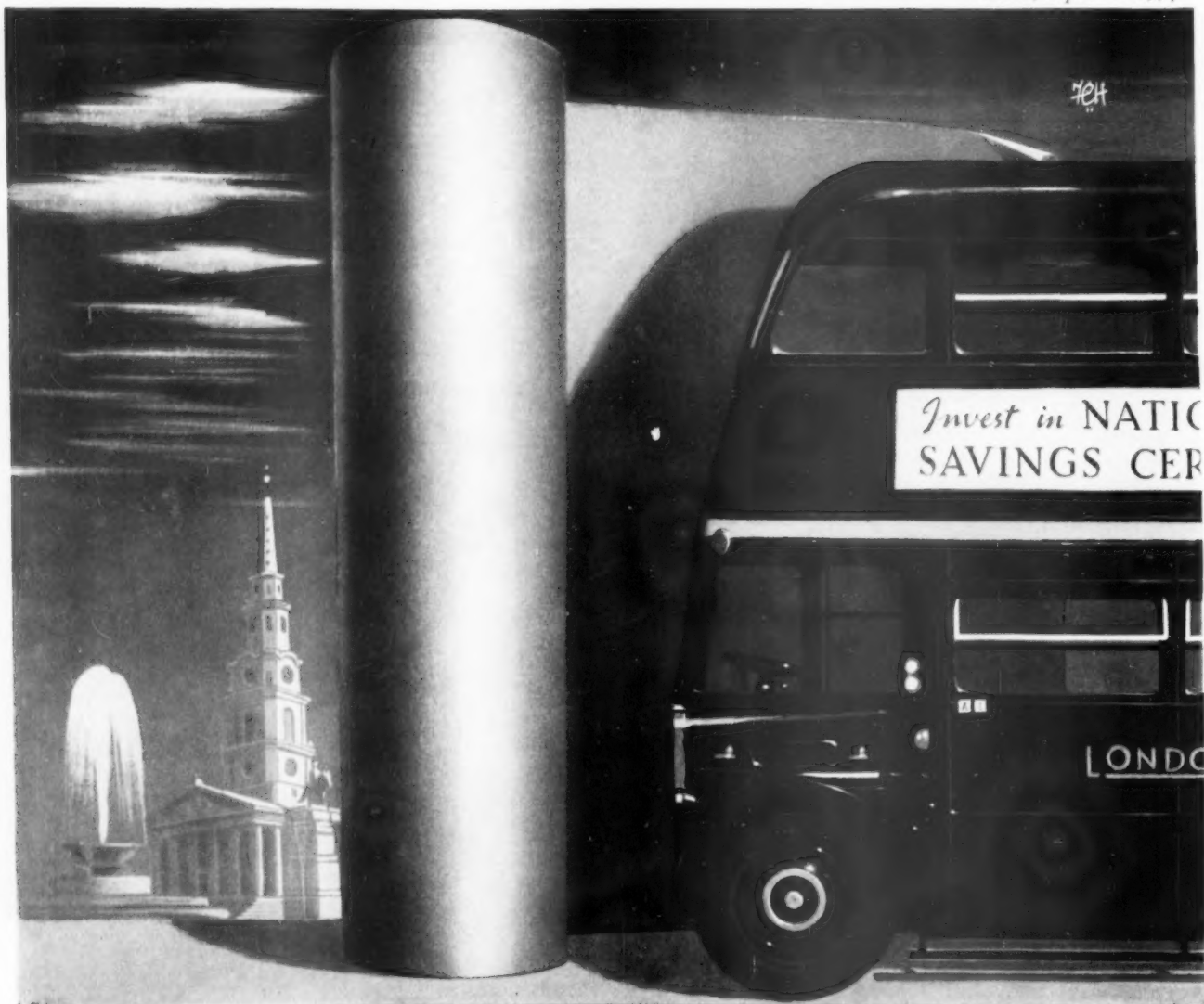


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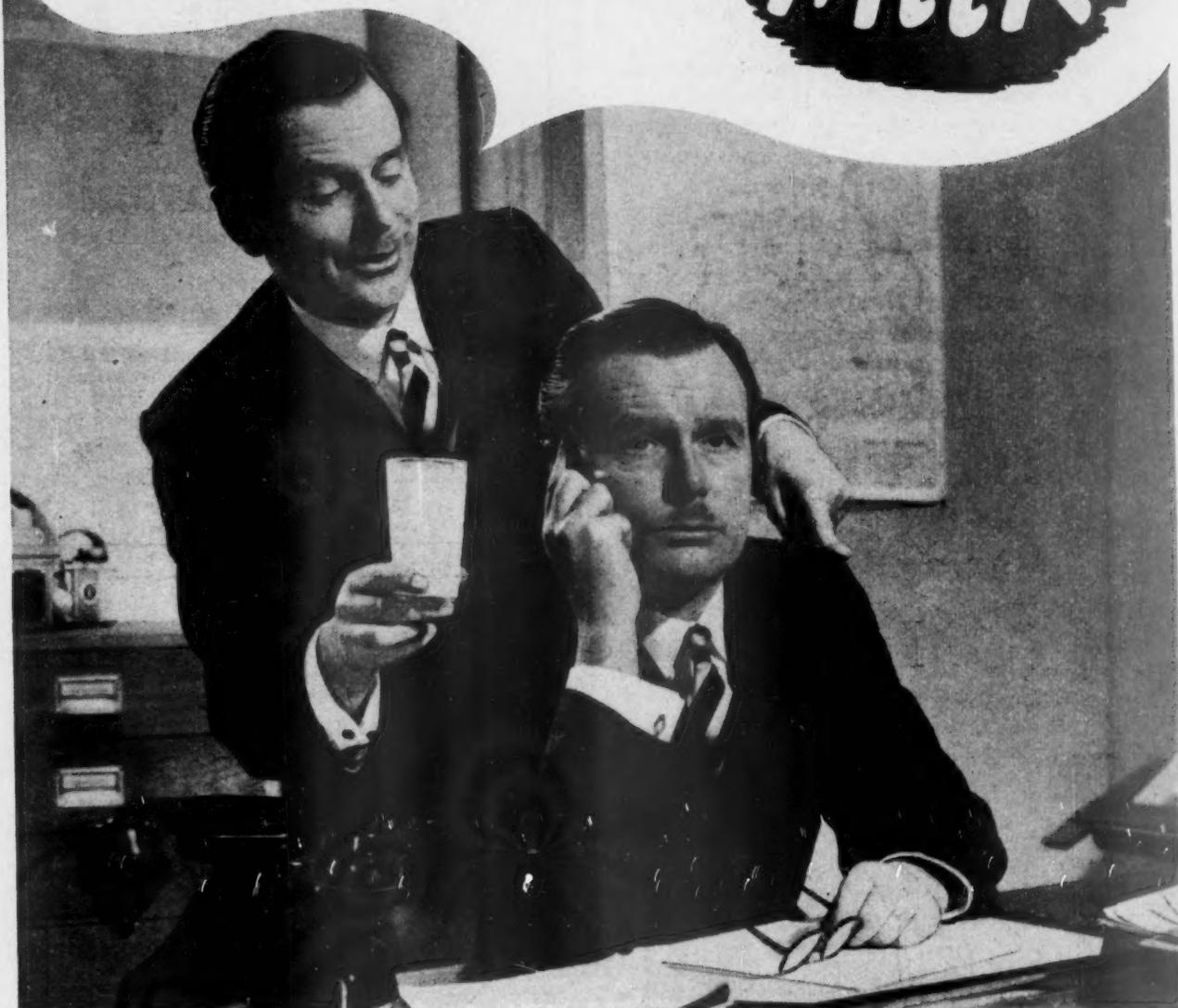
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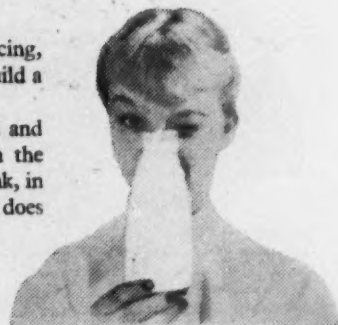
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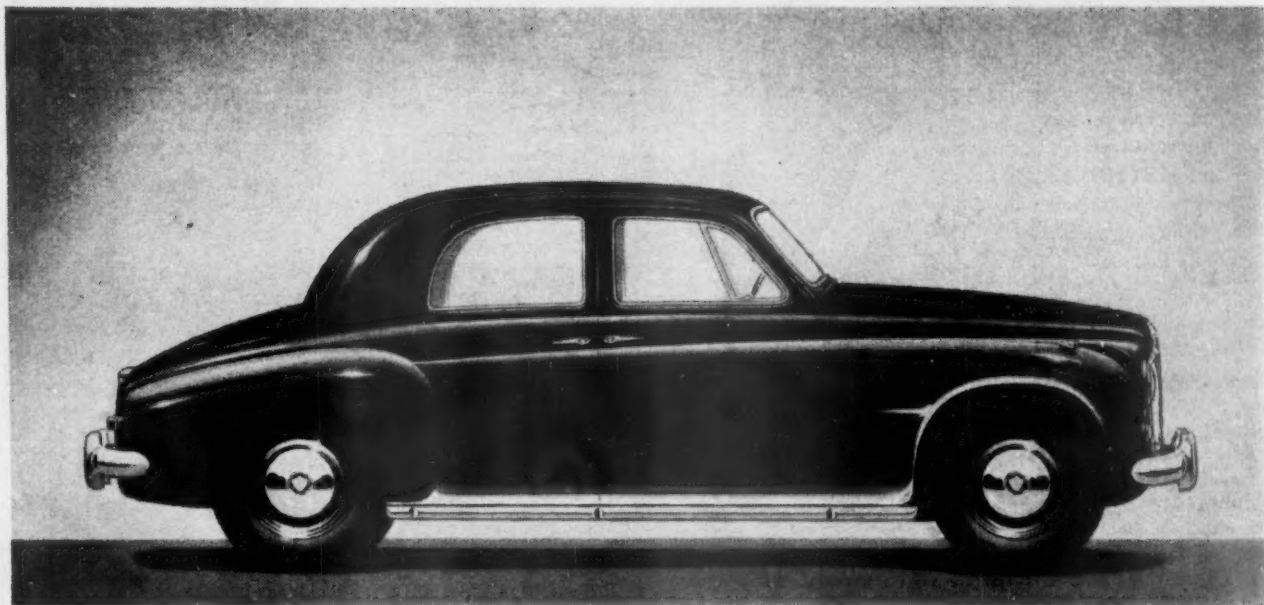
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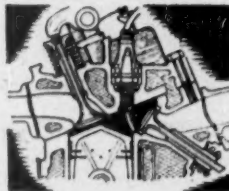


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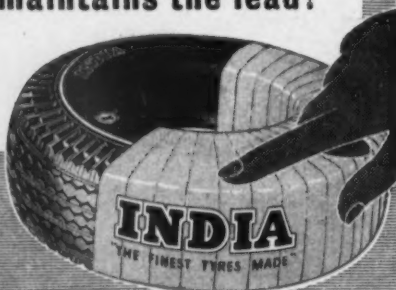
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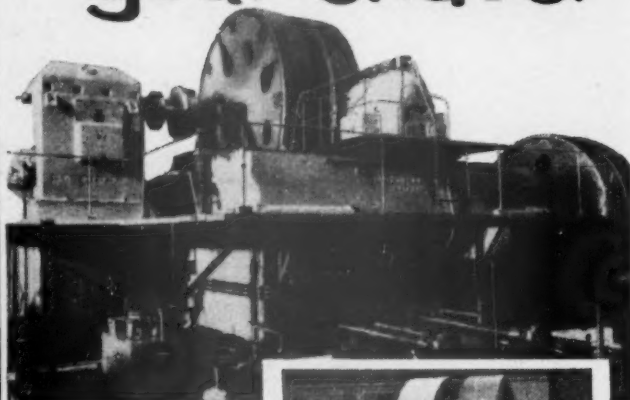
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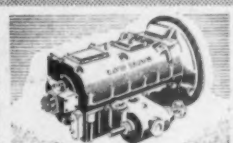
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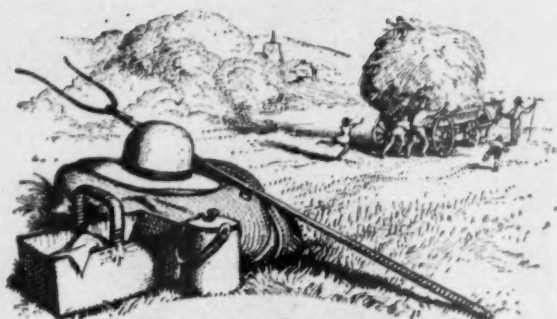
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Sobranie Meditations No. 5

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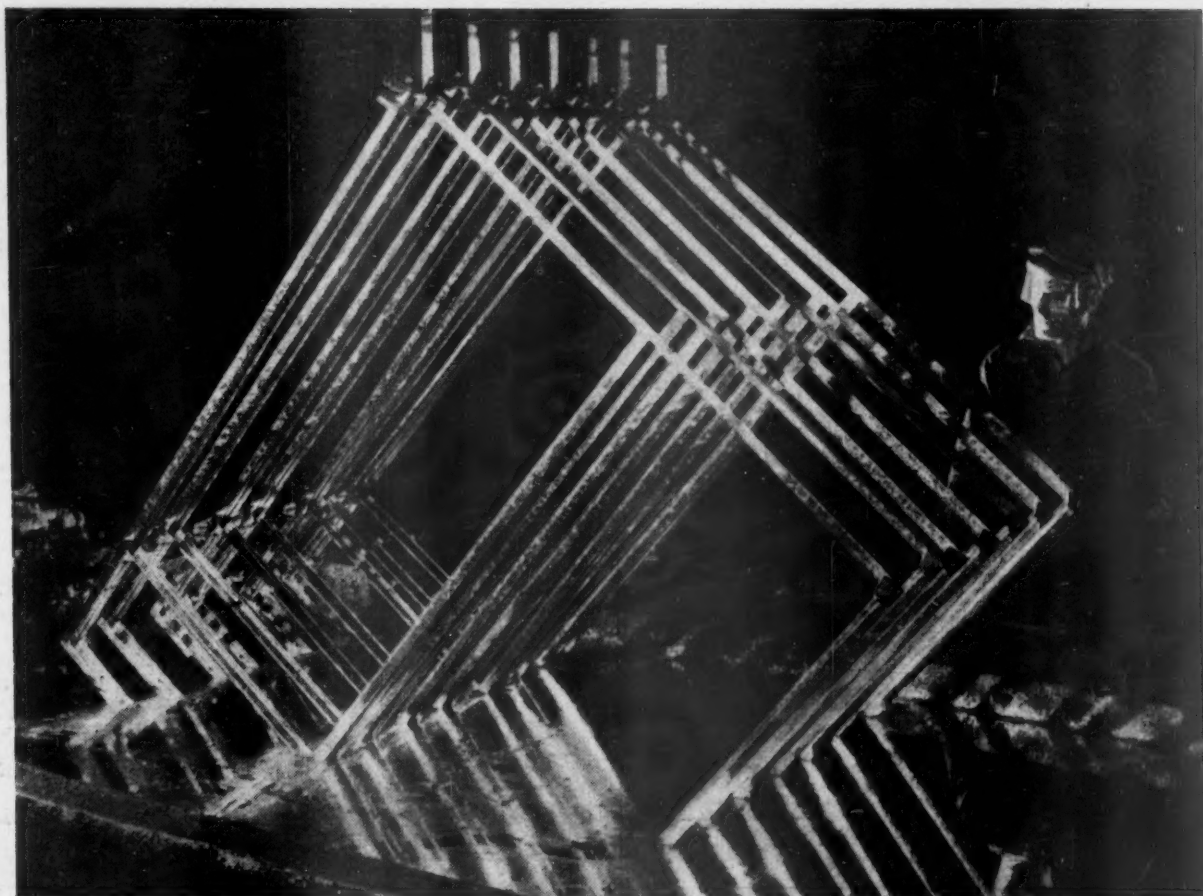
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BECOMES A "REGULAR" SECRETARY



When Miss J. takes shorthand even an Arab couldn't read it back. And her typing! "Come now, Miss J.," I said. "Either take a proper letter or a week's notice."

"I'm sorry," faltered Miss J. "I always seem to feel run down. It's the usual complaint. Every time I try to be bright and efficient my inner woman pipes up."

"So that's it, is it?" I mused.

"What is, Mrs. R.?" trembled Miss J.

"Pipe trouble," I said. "You see, Miss J., you've got 30 feet of piping in your inside and all your food has to pass through that filling system. There are muscles down there, too, to help pull it through—but they've nothing to pull on in the sort of soft, starchy food we eat nowadays."

"Inefficiency again," sighed Miss J.

"Quite," I said. "Everything in the IN-tray, nothing in the OUT-tray, and constipation pending. Your trouble is that your diet lacks bulk—for those intestinal muscles to work on. But there's a cure."

"Still nastier medicine?" quavered Miss J.

"Certainly not," I said. "A still nicer breakfast-food—All-Bran. Just a little All-Bran every day adds enough bulk to your diet to keep you 'regular.' You try it," I ordered.

"Yes, Mrs. R.," said Miss J., doubtfully.

One week later, a beaming confidential-secretarial Miss J. came into the office—and told me to take a letter. "Dear Madam," she dictated. "All-Bran certainly is a wonder. I enjoy keeping myself 'regular' this way."

"Yours faithfully," I said.

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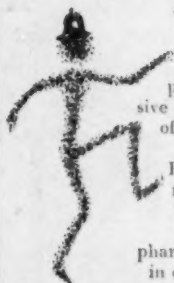
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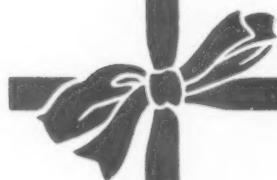
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They (Plantoids) are the finest plant food I have ever used. The Begonias are twice the normal size and some of the flowers are 5" across.

F.E.H., Lee.

The Committee made extensive experiments with Plantoids. The results have been quite amazing.

B.V.C., Gateacre.

Many thanks for marketing a product as good as Plantoids. I entered 14 classes and won 13 prizes.

W.N.C., New Cross.

What wonderful things your Plantoids are. I have had a marvellous crop of Tomatoes.

Mrs. N., Sheffield.

The above are extracts from unsolicited letters on our files.

Fed with Plantoids, the cucumber shown in the snapshot was 24½" in length, 3 lbs. 11½ ozs. in weight.

C.H.B., Harrow.

Grateful thanks. Our roses, etc., have been more beautiful than ever before.

A.E.R., Ely.

What a marvellous plant feeding substance Plantoids have proved. Never have I had flowers grow so big and beautiful.

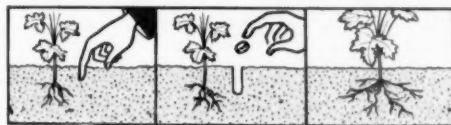
B.B., London.

I have used Plantoids for Sweet Peas, one plant has produced a flower stem bearing ten buds. Plantoids are prodigious.

L.C., Blackpool.

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